

A
GOSPEL-GLASSE,
Representing the
MISCARRIAGES
OF
English Professors,

BOTH

In their *Personal* and *Relative* Capacities, for
which God is contending with them, by the
Sword, Plague, &c. and (since the writing
of the greatest part of the following
Treatise for the Press) by the
dreadful *Fire* in *London*.

OR,

A CALL FROM HEAVEN
TO *SINNERS* and *SAINTS*.

By Repentance and Reformation to prepare to
meet God.

Levit. 19. 17. *Thou shalt not hate thy Brother in
thine heart: Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy
Neighbour, and not suffer Sin upon him.*

Jer. 2. 35. *Yet thou sayest, Because I am innocent
surely his anger shall turn from me: Behold, I
will plead with thee, because thou sayest, I have
not sinned.*

London, Printed for *Randolph Tayler*, and
are to be sold at the three Crowns in
Little-Britain, 1667.

SPRINT-GLASSE

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SCHEIDGES

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THE
Authors
P R E F A C E.

WHEN it is a day of darkness
and of gloominess, a day of
clouds, and of thick dark-
ness, *then (saith the Prophet)*

Blow ye the Trumpet in *Zion*, and Joel 2.
sound an Alarum in my holy Moun- 1, 2.
tain: Let all the Inhabitants of the
Land tremble. How hath the Lord
covered the Daughter of *Zion* with a Lam. 2.
Cloud in his anger, and cast down 1.
from Heaven unto the Earth the
beauty of *Israel*, and remembred not
his Foot-stool in the day of his anger?
He hath violently taken away his Ta- V. 6.
bernacle, as if it were of a Garden; he
hath destroyed the Places of the As-
sembly: The Lord hath caused the so-

The Authors

- letm Feasts and Sabbaths to be forgotten in *Zion*, and hath despised in the indignation of his anger *his*
- V. 7. Priests. *Yea*, the Lord hath cast off his Altar, he hath abhorred his Sanctuary, the Law *is no more*, her Prophets also find no Vision from the Lord. *O that now mine eyes could fail*
- V. 9. with tears, and my bowels were more troubled *within me*! *O that my Liver*
- V. 11. *were poured upon the Earth* for the destruction of the Daughter of my People, because the Children and the Sucklings swoon in the streets of the City! We see not our Signes, *there is*
- Psal. 74. no more any Prophet, neither *is there*
9. among us any that knoweth How Long.
- 2 Sam. *When we, like David, were restoring*
6. 1, 2. the Ark of God, *I mean, the presence of Christ, in his worship and Ordinances, what Stumblings of the Oxen have we seen? what miserable Disappointments have we met with? And what sad breaches have there been made? How hath God stoppt our way, and branded our Enterprises with wonderful remarks of his sore displeasure?*
- Hos. 4. 1. Hear therefore the word of the Lord,
ye

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ye Children of *Israel*, for the Lord hath a Controversie with the Inhabitants of the Land. *We poor Ministers have pleaded with you, till we can plead no more: the Lord hath bid us stand by, whilet he himself takes up the Controversie.* O is it not a fearful thing to fall into the Hebr. hands of the living God? *Are you not* 10. 31. *sensible what Arrows God hath begun to shoot amongst us? How many thousands, and ten thousands hath he taken away as with* Psal. 58. *a whirlwind by the Pestilence?* For all 9. this his anger is not turned away, but 1sa. 5. his hand is stretched out still. *How* 25. *bath God shaken our Heavens, and our* Hag. 2. *Earth; the Sea, as well as dry Land?* 6. *How doth he contend still by the Sword?* *And how much precious blood hath the Earth and Sea drunk up?* For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

O! Come, Behold the works of the Psal. 46. Lord, what desolations he hath made 8. in the Earth. Every Providence of God, (especially his more notable Acts) hath a reason written upon it, could mans eye read it. When the Church complained that God was as a stranger in the Land, and Jer. 14. as a wayfaring man, that turneth aside 8, 10.

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to tarry for a night : *The Lord replies to them, Thus have they loved to wander, &c. The Controversie began on their side : they may see their Sin in th: Punishment, as in a Glass. Do they wonder I grow strange to them ? The estrangement began on their part. Nothing appears more our instant Duty, than to enter a serious scrutiny, What have we done ? Wherein have we offended ? Let us search and try our wayes, (saith the afflicted Church of Judah, upon this very occasion, of the Lords covering himself with a Cloud, that their Prayers could not pass through) and turn again to the Lord. Let us lift up our heart, with our hands, unto God in the Heavens.*

Lam. 3. *O ! Consider your wayes : The Lord*
 40, 41, *doubleth it, Your iniquities have sepe-*
 44. *rated between you and your God, and*
 Hag. 1. *your sins have hid his face from you,*
 5. 7. *that he will not hear.*

Isa. 59. *I find men will easily subscribe to this,*
 2. *that Sin is the procuring cause of all misery ;*
but I find an aptness to transferr the guilt
from one to another, from one party to ano-
ther; and though people do even sell them-
selves to work wickedness, yet so pre-
dominant is Self-love, that it sees no spots
in

Preface.

in itself. Ahab is not the troubler of Israel, but Elijah: Nay, a good man, Aaron excuseth himself, and layes the blame on others. The Sin is theirs, not mine. Men have a natural desire to justifie themselves, and their desire is so strong, that they care not whom they bespatter or burden, so they may but ease and acquit themselves.

Exod.
32. 22.

And indeed, Sin is such an ugly Monster, that no man will own it, if he can choose; but had rather lay this Child of Darkness at any mans door, yea at Gods, than Father it himself.

My Design in this Enterprize, is, to obviate this Distemper, and to bring you, all of you, to own your iniquity; that you may say (resolve upon it) that you will confesse your iniquity, that so God may forgive the iniquity of your sin. My Place, and Duty, as a Minister (though wholly unworthy of that Relation to God and you) binds me to cause Jerusalem to know her abominations; and therefore I have descended to Particulars, that, if it be the will of God, I might hit the humour, and shew to every man the plague of his own heart.

Psal. 32.
5.

Ezek.
16. 2.

1 Kings
8. 38.

The Lord knoweth, I take no pleasure to
A 4 take

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take in these Dunghills: I dread the ill uses, that the Sons of Belial may make of this Enterprize: I expect various Censures from them, who should be otherwise minded; but my record is on high, that the great Design of this Publication is, to reduce Professours to a more aweful, humble, serious Repentance towards God, and singular Conversation be fore men.

Vox clau-
mantis
in De-
serto.

I thank God for the freedome that a Reverend Brother hath taken with the ejected Ministers; and I must profess, that since the perusal of that most seasonable Piece, I have had no quiet in my Conscience, till I entred upon this Labour. Though my bodily Distempers pleaded loud for my silence; though I was told, the prudent should hold their peace in an evil day; though I know 'tis an unthankful office to admonish and reprove, &c. Yet I have laid by all Impediments and Objections that Self was obtruding; and wish I had such gifts, and such affections, and such a discerning of the hearts and lives of Professours, as might render me some way useful, to put you upon self-reflection, upon self-tryal, in order to a full Repentance: I pray God, I may so farr at least succeed, as to obstruct that cursed exclaiming against the sins of Governours;

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ours, and the sins of divided Parties, as at length to make you cry out, What have I done? O! how have I provoked God?

Out of pity to your souls have I undertaken this subject: Our pangs, like those of a travailling woman, are hastening: the Clouds are swelling, I am loth they should fall on you in a secure and impenitent condition, I am not ashamed to tell you, that I foresee foul weather; and I would you should be in readiness for boisterous Seas. I know nothing save guilt will then sink your hearts: the load of affliction will be so heavy and hard upon you, that I would have nothing else (not the load of millions of unrepented sins) at the same time, to press you down. Sins unrepented of, will soon, as poison, drink up your spirits. If sin be confessed, and repented of, if God hath forgiven, no matter what loads lye upon the back, seeing no guilt lyes upon the Conscience.

Having given you an account of my Design, and the reason of it, I shall only add,

That it may not be expected I should give you a full Catalogue of all your sins, which are provocations in the eyes of the Lord this day. Who can understand his errours?
Cleanse

*Pfal. 19. Cleanse thou me (and the Land) from
12. all our secret, as well as known, faults.*

*2. God forbid I should be so censorious, as to
judge all Professours guilty of these sins, in
all the Particularities, or in all the Ag-
gravations of them. Some are to be charged
one way, some another; few can wash their
hands in innocency, that they are no ways
Principals or Accessories.*

*3. Farr be it from me to be partial in my
Charge, to advance any Faction of men up-
on the ruines of their Brethren.*

*4. I desire you would take this Catalogue in-
to your Closets with you, and as you read, set
a special mark of observation on those sins,
which are chiefly yours, in order to repen-
tance, and amendment, and then give the
Lord no rest, till he hath took his Pen, and
dipt it in the blood of his Son, and blotted
them out of his Diary, and remembrance.*

*5. And Lastly, Let me beseech the Reader,
to be very importunate with the Lord, for an
humble, tender spirit; that prejudice, un-
belief, and hardness of heart, may not accom-
pany him in the perusal of the following lines,
and thereby, both his, and my own endea-
vours, become abortive.*



A Brief
ACCOUNT
OF

What may be expected in the following

TREATISE,

By a Friend to the Authour and Reader.

Professour, In this necessary and seasonable Gospel-Glass, there are many sad, but useful Sights for thee.

First, Wouldst thou know what may be seen? I'll tell thee; Herein the Miscarriages of Professours (and therefore of thine own self) are enumerated and aggravated. The Sins enumerated are either against the Law and Gospel joyntly, or against the Gospel and Law severally.

Pro-

The Contents.

Professours Sins *against the Law and Gospel joyntly*, are hinted in the first Chapter, which shews their *Regardlessness of their own and others Souls*.

Their Sins *against the Gospel* more peculiarly, are spoken to in the seven next Chapters. The 2d. shews their *Want of saving Conviction and Compunction*: the 3d. their *Want of Despair in Self*: the 4th. their *Miscarriages about Soul-troubles*, the four following Chapters, their *Miscarriages about believing in Christ*: the 5th. their *Ignorance of Christ, serving their turns of Christ, making base Capitulations with him*: the 6th. their *Delays to close with Christ*: the 7th. their *Taking Christ partially, without conjugal Affections, and without considering the Cost they may be at*: the 8th. their *Shuffling together false Signes of closing with Christ*.

Their Sins *against the Law* more peculiarly, are either against the *First or Second*

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Second Table. Their Sins *against the First Table* (under the Head of *Ungodliness*) are discovered in the Eleven following Chapters. The 9th. shews their *Ignorance and Errours*: the 10th. their *Want of Love to God*: the 11th. their *Evil Surmises of God*: the 12th. their *Unthankfulness*: the 13th. their *Neglect of Prayer*, especially of *Secret, both Ejaculatory and Closet-Prayer*: the 14th. their *Miscarriages about their Prayers*: the 15th. their *Slighting the written Word of God*, especially in not reading and meditating on it as they ought: the 16th. their *Miscarriages about the Promises*: the 17th. their *Abuse of Providence*: the 18th. their *Hypocrisy*: the 19th. their *Sabbath-Sins*.

Their Sins *against the Second Table*, are either *Personal* or *Relative*.

Their *Personal Sins* are evinced in the four next Chapters. The 20th. shews their *Miscarriages about Self-tryal*: the 21st. their *Pride*: the 22d. their *Gluttony*: the 23d. their *Idleness*. Their

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Their *Relative* Sins are spoken to in the Fourteen following Chapters. The 24th. shews their *Unmercifulness*: the 25th. their *Unrighteousness*, or *Unfaithfulness in Trading*: the 26th. their *Covetousness*: the 27th. their *Envy*: the 28th. their *Sins as Superiours*: the 29th. as *Husbands or Wives*: the 30th. as *Parents or Children*: the 31st. as *Masters or Servants*: the 32d. their *Miscarriages towards Ministers, before their silencing*: the 33d. *Since their silencing*: the 34th. their *Miscarriages towards Sinners*.

The *Aggravations* of their *Miscarriages*, that are here enumerated, thou hast in the two next Chapters. The 37th. shews their *Dis-ingenuity and Scandalousness*: the 38th. their *Sinning against Knowledge, and impenitently, notwithstanding all means to bring them unto Repentance*.

Secondly, Wouldst thou know, and that experimentally, *How useful such Sights*

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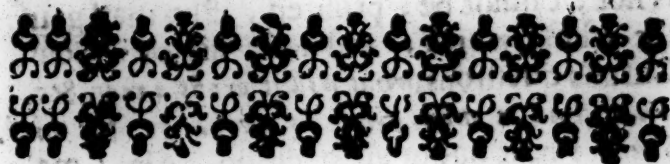
Sights may be unto thy Soul? Read diligently the two last Chapters. The 39th. shews, *What Use thou shouldst make of this Glass*: and the 40th. *What Reason there is thou shouldst make such Use thereof.*

And now, Consciencious Reader, (so I stile thee, because I hope thou resolvest so to be) having given thee this brief Account of what thou mayest expect in the following excellent Treatise, I cannot but assure thee, that if thou bringest hither with thee a *serious* and *teachable* Spirit, desirous to have thy *Soul searched to the quick*, and the *sores thereof launced*, and *thoroughly cured*, thou wilt not lose thy cost and pains: The *closeness* and *pythiness* of the *Complement*, will not only *please*; but the *Materials*, so full of *Spiritual-vigour*, and *Scriptural-experience*, will wonderfully *advantage* thy Soul, and give thee cause, all the dayes of thy life, yea to eternity, to bless God, for putting it into the heart of the Reverend Authour (after he
hath

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hath sacrificed his spirits and strength, in a publick way of service to God, and his Church, with more than ordinary activity and self-denial) under many bodily weakneses, yea *under a sentence of death*, thus to employ his *Pen*, when he cannot his *Tongue*, for the good of thy Soul. *Every particular Chapter*, will, if God add his blessing, prove a *compleat Soul-saving Treatise*. I shall add no more, to perswade thee to *Come and see*, but this, that nothing but *unwillingness to see* what is here to be seen, and *unperswadableness to make* such *improvement* of such *Sights*, can makethy Case desperate. Be sure only, *Before, In,* and *After*, thy serious perusal of these Chapters, of so much worth, that thou beg earnestly of God, that he would be pleased, with some of his Sons *Eye-salve*, to *open* thine eyes, that thou mayest *see*; and by his Spirit *move* so upon thy spirit, that thine eye may suitably *affect* thine heart, with what so much tends to the promoting of thine eternal welfare.

CHAP.



The Sins of Professours:

CHAP. I.

Their regardlessness of Souls:

I.



*How Careless are we of our
own Souls?*

1. *O how few do believe ignorance
they are men, having bo- of their
dies that must dye, but precious-
Souls that will never dye? nels.*

How few do believe that
their bodies were given them to be service-
able to their Souls: Their heads, their hearts,
their eyes, their ears, their hands, their
feet, &c. were all to attend upon their souls,
and to help them to Heaven: But this is not
believed by many: As they are ignorant of
the blessed God, who made them, and of
Jesus Christ, who came to redeem them;
and know not whether there be an Holy-Ghost
or no: So they are ignorant of the precious-
ness of their Souls: Christ hath not given
A them

Their regardlessness of Souls.

them eyes to read and understand that a man is not, cannot be, profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own Soul. Chrill's questions, *what will it profit a man, &c.*

Math. 16.
26.

What shall a man give in exchange for his Soul? Put it out of all question. Alas! many, who carry the name of Christians, deserve not the name of men. When you begin to value your Souls, you begin to be men. Oh that men would value that, which once they shall, they must, value? The damned Spirits know now the worth of their Souls: How many will not?

Inconsi-
derate-
ness.

2. *How few consider the worth and preciousness of their Souls?* When do such thoughts, as these, possesse you? "Here in this earthly tabernacle, in this house of booths dwells a thing, that I never said, that is worth a world: though here I *crawl* up and down, like a *worm* of two or three Cubits long, and am in danger to be thrown into an *hole* every day; yet I carry with me a *Jewel*, the loss whereof the whole world cannot repair. How feldome do nominal Professours consider sadly and seriously, what will become of their souls, when *their excellency, which is in them, shall go, or journey, away*, as *Eliphaz* speaks? Examine your thoughts all the day long, from morning to Evening, and few are laid out for the Soul.

Job. 4 21.

Caring
more for
the body
than the
Soul.

3. *Are not all the thoughts and cares laid out upon the body*, though the body be but *clay*, and the soul is a *spirit*, the body must *dye*; but the soul shall *never dye*? How frequently do

we

Their regardlesseſſe of Souls.

3

we think of our bodies, what their wants, burthens, necessities are? but not so of our souls. How much of every day is spent in providing for thy *body*, but how little for thy *soul*? The *body* should be but the *soul's* servant, yet men feed the slave, and starve the child. The *body* must be fed every day, clad every day, yea adorned every day, and *physick* if distempered; but the *soul* needs food, rayment, *physick* continually, yet lyeth unregarded, is left miserable, naked, starved, &c. A servant hath two talents to keep, the child, and the child's cloaths: will the Master thank the servant, if he plead I have kept the cloaths; but I have neglected the life of the child? Thy *body* is but thy *soul's* outward garments. How often have your Ministers told you, that the soul was better than the body? and that your souls needed dayly care more than your bodies? and yet you look after the one, with the neglect of the other. A day is coming, when thou wilt wish thou hadst been bred in the Field among the beasts and worms, for that thou regardedst thy soul no more, than if thou hadst but the life of a beast: thou wilt wish thou hadst been made a toad, a serpent, a worm, a dog, a swine, &c. for then thou shouldst not have suffered to eternity, as now thou wilt, unless the eyes of thy understanding be opened to see, consider, and make provision for thy precious, but perishing soul. Thy body is perishing every day, and thy soul is upon the borders of eternity: it must live for ever;

Their regardlessness of Souls.

and yet all thy care is for the body, which likely will not live threescore years and ten; but the soul is neglected, that must live threescore millions of years in hell without repentance, and then, when that date is over, thou art as far from the end of thy misery, as thou wast the first day, thou wast thrown among the damned.

Strange-
ness
towards
our souls.

4. *How many will not speak with their souls?* They are greater strangers to them, than the Londoners are to their next Neighbours. Didst thou ever ask thy soul such questions? "O my soul, *how is it, how will it be, with thee?*" "O my soul, *in what state art thou?*" "O my soul, *what will become of thee?*" "O! *what will become of thee in the next world?*"

Niggard-
lyness to-
wards our
souls.

5. *At what cost were we any time for our jeopardded soul?* The Physician is consulted with, if there be an ache upon the body: we will, with the woman, part with all, beggar our selves, to recover health of body. When did you know a man starve himself, if he could have bread, and water, what ever it cost? We will be at any expence of time, labour, and charges, to keep our bodies from starving; but how are the Ordinances of God, the Word and Sacraments (the spiritual food of the soul) neglected? The flesh must be satisfied; as for the soul, there is little regard to its well-being. We cannot endure to see a Cat, a Dog, a Beast want meat; but how easily do many digest the want of that milk, whereby they should be maintained and grow? God (saith one) gives

1 Pet. 2. 2.

Their regardlessness of Souls.

5

to these their requests, he gives them quails,
but sends leanness into their souls.

6. How fearless are many of soul-losses? Fearless-
how common is it for people to draw back-ness of
from the service of Christ? O! what is the souls los-
matter? I shall lose my estate, liberty, pay souls los-
such a fine, &c. They little consider what fcs,
their souls will lose, if they do not perse-
vere, if they live not up their light. Pro-
fessours (pardon me that I miscall you) though
you are blind, and mad, and see not the worth
of your souls; yet know, that your souls are
the most considerable Jewels, you stand pos-
sessed of. All the world will not weigh with
one soul. Thy money may ransom thy body;
nothing save Christs blood thy soul. Pause,
while (Reader) and reflect on all thy sin-
full neglects of thy immortal Soul, lest on
thy death-bed thou shriek and cry, O my soul,
whether art thou going?

2. How little are the souls of others valued Careless-
and cared for? how many masters are there, ness of o-
that care no more for their servants souls, than thers
for the dogs? nay not so much? Perhaps souls.
some of you are careful that the bodies of
your families be clothed, be fed, &c. but
the souls lie unprovided for: more care is ta- Soul-pby-
ken for the pig, than for the souls. soners not
censured

1. How do we justly censure them as worthy as they
of Capital punishments, that murder the bo- ought to
dies of men; but not so others who poyson and be.
destroy thousands of souls? Make no-

How do you hate to have an hand in murde- thing to
ring the bodies of any, to lay poyson for lay poy-
son for
de-souls,

Their regardlessness of Souls.

destruction of any? and yet how commonly do men lay the poyson of ill counsell, and ill example before others to cause them to fall into the pit of hell, and are not affected with this great evil?

Not troubled at
soul-mur-
thers.

2. *How troubled are we at any that kill bodies, or that murder others, but not so at the millions, that destroy their own and others souls, that have an hand in ruining, in damning themselves and others?*

3. *If any neglect means that might have con-
vinced the life of their husbands, children, &c.
how are they dejected? how do they wring
their hands, and beat their breasts? whereas,
if by carelessness, if by the neglect of their
duties, if by evil example, they have de-
stroyed their souls, they are not troubled
about these matters.*

Low ef-
zeems of
those that
prize
their
souls.

4. *How do you account meely of all that
take pains for their souls? that wait at the
pools of Bethesda, that consult Ministers,
and books, and attend on the Ordinances for
their souls, whilst you account it your wis-
dome to lay out the most, if not all, of
your time for your bodies? Hast thou the
name of a Christian? I pray God to let one
word to sink into thine heart; thou hast not
Christ, thou hast not the Spirit of Christ in
thee; he knows how to value souls, and there-
fore shed blood for them, and sends his Spi-
rit in the Gospel to be importunate for their
salvation.*



CHAP. II.

Their want of saving Conviction and Compunction.

HOW many Professours, like *Paul*, are *Alive* *without the Law*? How many, *without* like *Sardis*, have a *name to live*; imagine the *Law*. they are alive, *when they are dead*? How *Rom 7.9.* many are alive in their own conceit, and *Rev. 3.4.* perhaps in the conceit of others, and yet are void of the true super-natural life? *How many are contented with their being baptized?* They see no need of Christ, they were born of Christian Parents, they are of the stock of *Luke 3.8.* *Abraham: We have Abraham to our Father.* They do not consider how many *baptized* persons are deadly *enemies* to Christ, and to their souls, and averse to the ways of holiness: they will not consider that Swearers, Drunkards and Adulterers have as good *claimes* to Christ and heaven as these have. *How many also please themselves with the Religion of Education?* God hath not moulded their hearts, though Parents their lives: their Parents have taught them some Principles of Religion, but they are strangers to the wonderful operations and teachings of the

Their want of saving Conviction.

Holy Ghost: they have not the *unction from above* (they know not what it is) *that teacheth all things*; and yet such as these are *alive*, i. e. merry, jocund, jovial, confident if any goe to heaven, they shall be of the number. But to speak more particularly.

Few convinced of original sin imputed.

First, How many are there that were never convinced of original sin, imputed, or imparted? 1. *How few are convinced that Adam was a common person, and that we sinned in his loynes; that if he had stood, we had stood; and that it is just with God, that he ship wracking himself, we should be counted sinners in him? We did eat of the forbidden fruit in Adam, we in Adam believed the Devil rather than God, we in Adam broke with God for toys and trifles; we were ungrateful, disobedient in him; we apostatized in him, and broke covenant with God in him; hence by one mans offence sin entered into the world, and death by sin; for that (as Levi paid tithes in Abraham, so) we become rebels against the Majesty of Heaven in our first Parents; when did you shed a tear for Adam's sin, for your and his grand provocation?*

Rom. 5. 12

Few convinced of original sin inherent.

2. *How few see Adam's sinful nature imparted to them? They see not their inward part is very wickedness, nothing but wickedness. Few see what a sad Apostacy from the perfection of mans nature Sin hath brought into the world; and how black an Image of Sathan it hath drawn upon the soul; they never saw what filthy, dirty, loathsome things they are in the eyes of God: they never*

Psal. 5. 9.

ver

ver saw their noysomeness and venome, the
garbage and malignity of their hearts. *How*
few see a general defect of all righteousness and
holiness, wherein at first they were created?
How few are convinced of an antipathy to all
that is good? That they are haters of God by
nature; that they are *dead in trespasses and Eph. 2.1;*
sins (a more dreadful estate than if they were
rotting in their graves) that they have an O-
cean of corruption within them, that will
never be dried up in this life; that they have
a worse Leprosie than that among the *Jewes*,
which got into the walls, and would never
out till the house was demolished; who
almost thinks so sadly of themselves? They
bless God their hearts are good, though
they be the worst of men, pray not, slight
Ordinances, closet duties, and family wor-
ship lies neglected; yet the Devil persuades
them all is well; their hearts are good;
though the heart of man by nature be like hell
it self, whose fire of lust is unquenchable;
though it be like *Peter's great sheet*, which
he saw in the Vision, *full of all unclean things;*
though it be a receptacle of all impiety; yet *Acts 11.6*
how few turn their eyes inward, to see their
natural deformities?

Alas! All the venome the Snake sends
forth, is nothing to the poyson that lies in its
nature: And all those monstrous impieties,
which the lives of men are taunted with, are
not to be compared with the venome that
lurks in the heart of every man by nature.
Men would not glory in their blood and de-
scend,

Their want of saving Condition.

scant, did they but believe how sin descended, and was conveyed: Men could not content themselves to walk heavily under some actual misdemeanours, were they convinced of the body of sin within them, their greatest sorrows would be for their sinful propensities: Neither would you wonder at any impieties and enormities in the Earth, but would admire at the restraints of Heaven, that they are no greater. Alas! If the Reader were left to himself, he would presently lay hands on his nearest relations, and on himself: Certainly, the reason why we turn not *Cannibals*, why every man is not a *Sodomite*, a *Murderer*, an *Oppressor*, &c. is, because God hath a rein on the heart, and curbs it, for the continuation of mankind, that otherwise would soon be destroyed. *The great boundary of the Seas, and of the Ocean of corruption, is the Sovereign above.* But O! how do we commend Nature! such a man hath a good nature; such a man you may trust him, he will never commit such abominations: You may as well believe a Toad will not poison, or the Sea will not overflow the Earth, if God leave it to its self. But to descend to particulars.

1. *How few see the corruption of their mind?*
 Few are convinced, that the carnal mind is *enmity against God, and is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be*. How are our minds delighted with tales and toys, more than with the serious mysteries of God? How few are sensible, that they are as foolish and mad as any *Bedlams*, in that, they please

Few convinced of the minds

on.

Rom. 8.7.

Their want of saving Conviction.

11

please themselves with that, which should be their greatest burden, namely Sin? They are worse than the Bee or Ant, for these prepare for a severe hard Winter, *these* provide for *hereafter*, whilst most people mind *present* things, *present* pleasure, *present* profit, &c. with the neglect of heaven, and *future* glory: They mind more what to eat and drink *here*, what to have at present for *this* life, than what to lay up for *eternity*: They busie themselves to know what is of *no* consequence, but careless of *momentous* and *eternal* matters. How few employ their minds to know God, and how he is to be worshipped and pleased; but employ themselves in needless and unprofitable speculations; in this, like *fools* and *children*, who prefer *painted glass* before *jewels of value*, they more set by a little mirth and pleasure, than the matters of their salvation? How are our *minds* enslaved to our *affections*; to the more brutish, inferior and ignoble parts of the soul, and we love to have it so? Through this corruption of our minds how do we justify sin, excuse it, and plead for it? Hence also, there are swarms of idle, confused, impertinent, foolish, ridiculous thoughts, that fill our souls and duties; seldom in the day, week or year, any conceptions of God, suitable to his majesty and holiness. How unstable are our minds and judgements, so that we are *as reeds shaken with every wind*; now for duty, then soon wheel'd off again: now for repenting and humbling work, then tired, and soon di-

Their want of saving Conviction.

diverted? And if we know the out-side of truths, yet how often is that a barr to our closing with Christ, and walking in him? And yet, though these poor, blind, deluded *Bartimeus's* fill all our wayes and paths, so that where ever we goe we meet with them; yet how seldome are any convinced of this, how seldome do any cry for *eye salve*, that *they may see*?

Few convinced of the corruption of the Conscience.
Tit. 1. 15. 2. And though *not only the mind, but the conscience is defiled*; though there be a blindness upon it, whereby it mis judgeth, and calleth darkness light; and though it be senseless and stupid, as a stone; yet *few do believe this corruption*: hence they take sanctuary in their consciences, *their consciences bear them witness*; though it be bribed and corrupted; and *they have a good conscience*, though they know not what conscience is.

Few convinced of the corruption of their Will. 3. *How few are convinced of the corruption of their Will?* How do they wish that drunkenness, uncleanness, &c. were no sins? How do they choose to live a merry, rather than an holy life; to be the servants of the Devil, rather than of God; to commit sin, and thereby hazard their damnation, rather than to suffer, and through many tribulations to enter into the Kingdom of God? And how gladly would most Professours enter and take up their rest in somewhat below God, if they could but enjoy the world according to their will?

Few convinced of the corruption of their Affections. 4. *Few are convinced of the pollution of their Affections.* Though they hate what they should

should love, and love what they should hate; though they love sin, which they should hate, and hate and slight God, to whom they should give the precedence of their love; though all be in disorder, all be mis-placed; though God be dethroned, and Sin, Sathan, and the World be set up above all that is called God; yet few do really believe that such a miserable Chaos is upon them.

5. *How few are sensible of the corruption of their Memory?* Though they are especially charged to remember God, and how to get a possession of him; and to remember duty, and how to practise; and to remember sin, and how to shun it: yet how soon do they forget such truths, and lodge in their memories injuries, that they may avenge them; and vanities, foolish jests, unprofitable toys and tales, to please themselves therewith? You can remember how merry you were such a time, how vain, how your sensualities were abounding; but you soon forget a Sermon; or if you remember any thing delivered by the Preacher, it is that, which either concerns others conditions, rather than yours, or which yields you the least advantages heavenward. We can remember the fall of Peter much easier than the repentance of Peter; than his bitter weepings; we can remember David's Adultery, but not his Repentance, and how it broke his bones, and made his bed so swim.

Few convinced of the corruption of their Memories.

Secondly, *How few have been convinced that sin is the greatest evil?* How few have seen

Few convinced that sin is the greatest evil.

Their want of saving Conviction.

seen it in its perfect odiousness, in its naked face, as that which makes Men Devils, fighting against God? *How are most strangers to its pedigree, and consider not the Devil to be its Father?* We would be thought to have nothing to do with the Devil, nor that he hath any thing to do with us; we can live in sin, and yet (hypocritically enough) *despise the Devil, and all his works*: We can make more moderate constructions of our sins, and call them the frailties of our flesh; but *he that commits sin is of the Devil, i. e. the Devil's drudge*; Sathan works in him, and by him. If men were convinced of this, they would not *drink in the Devil's piss*. Sin it comes from the Devil, it is *the Devil's excrement*, and yet this is rolled under the tongue as a *sweet morsel*. O! with what greediness is *the dung of hell* devoured and swallowed? *How few see sin to be contrary to the works of God?* although God had no sooner perfected the goodly fabrick of Heaven and Earth, but sin gave a shrewd shake to all, it shook and dis-joynted all; and had it not been for Christ, the great Mediatour, it had ruined the whole frame of Nature. *How few see sin to be contrary to the will of God?* God saith, *I will have this done*; *I'll not do it*, saith Sin: *I'll have this suffered*, saith God; *I'll not suffer it*, saith Sin: Nay so great is the contest betwixt Sin and God, that if it could, it would un-bee God. *How few take notice of its contrariety to the very nature of God?* God is good, *Sin is evil*; God is pure, *Sin is impure*. *How few*

*few believe sin to be universally evil, that there is no good in it? We cannot perswade men, that there is good in poverty, good in disgrace, good in reproaches with the tongue, and persecutions unto death; but easily are men perswaded, there is some good in sin. How few are convinced of the miserable effects and consequences of sin? The wrath of God is not revealed against their unrighteousness and ungodliness, so as to make their knees so tremble. The hand-writing on the wall is not observed. They are still alive. We cannot for our hearts perswade men to goe up to heaven, to see what spoyles it made there; could we herein prevail, then would they infer, that there is more evil in the least sin, than there is good in all the Angells of heaven; for that one sin conquered them, and spoyled them of all their beauty, and made them, of glorious creatures, to become such loathsome and hideous spectacles; neither can we prevail with any (almost) to take a journey to Paradise, to see its venome there; or to goe to the Garden, or to Mount Calvary, to see what work it did there; or to goe to hell-gate, to hear the doleful shrieks and cries which it hath caused there; though God hath said, *God shall wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalp of such a one will he goeth on still in his trespasses*; though there is no peace, *saieth my God, to the wicked*; though *sin be the sole object of Gods hatred*; for as *God loved the whole Creation, till its beauty was blasted and stained by sin*) though sin on-
ly*

Iſa. 59. 2. ly ſeperates between God and ſouls, though in the belly of it be found all miſeries, deaths, and hells; though it be the founder of all graves, and of Tophet; though it fill the conſcience with terrours, and hell with fire and brimſtone; yet few are affected with the evils of it; but they drink in iniquity as water.

Few ſenſible of Law? that they are condemned creatures? that the wrath of God abideth on them? Few have ſeen the black cloud full of woes, brim full of wrath, ready to empty it ſelf upon their ſouls: they take no notice, that though the ſentence be not executed ſpeedily; yet it is given forth; and there may be but a little breath, and they are gone to periſh for ever.

How many ſenſeleſs ſouls are there in our Pariſhes, whoſe conſciences were never ſhaken, whoſe ſpirits were never wounded, who never received the ſpirit of bondage to fear, who never knew what a fearfull expectation of judgement meant, who go dancing to hell in the Devils chains? and yet count themſelves the noble and gallant ſpirits, and flatter themſelves in their own eyes, and ſay, we ſhall have peace, though we walk in the

Deluſ. 29. imaginations of our hearts? Theſe are (Laodicean-like) rich, and full, and needing nothing, when God is about to ſpue them out of his mouth, (as we diſcharge our ſtomacks of ſome loathſome ſurfets.) Theſe are wiſer in their own conceit, then ſeven men that can render

Pro. 26. 16.

der a reason Though one Minister at the heels of another endeavour with Scripture upon Scripture to convince them of, and to prick them at the heart for, their sin and danger; yet they are boysterously confident and presumptuous; that they shall to heaven as soon as any Preticians in the Country. Never did many break one nights sleep, upon the consideration of their sinfull and lost condition by nature: never did they loath their ordinary food, or feel the smart of broken bones, as *David* did; though they have sinned at an higher rate: never did they know what a *wounded spirit* meant, what anguish of soul was: never did they feel Gods wrath, or sin, as then insupportable; they were never *pricked at the heart*, so as to cry out, *What shall I do to be saved? What shall I do to have my sins pardoned?* Would you know the reason of all this security? Alas! they are dead in sins and trespasses. A dead condition is an insensible condition; death deprives of sense as well as life; the dead are not frightened with the swords and pistols at their breasts; the dead fear not, though threatened with *fire and brimstone*; the dead hear not, though God be on Mount *Ebal* thundering curses upon curses; the dead see not, though sin be so ugly a monster, and hell so frightfull a place; the dead smell not, though sin stinks worse; than the vomit of dogs; than rotten Sepulchres, or than the corrupted matter of the most nasty disease; it offends not the dead to have this stinking *Carrión* alwayes in their

2 Pet. 2.
10,

Their want of saving Compunction.

their bosomes; the dead *feel* not, though that which is *heavier* than *mountains of lead* be lying on their backs; they grow not, neither do they complain so much, as *Cain* did, they do not *go softly* in the bitterness of their souls, by reason of their sins. Many cannot say with *Hannah*, that ever they were of a *sorrowfull Spirit*. Though there be so many curses upon the heads of all natural persons, though there be an entayl of wrath upon the heads of the very sins, they live in; though their sins are, or may be, circumstantiated to a greater degree, than any of the Scripture-Offenders that we read of, as being committed under the open Sun of the Gospel; though *Hell* be open to receive them every moment, whilst impenitent, whilst hardened; though the Valley of *Hinnom* is making room for them, to entertain them with the vengeance of a justly-provoked God; yet few fear, few *work out* their salvation with *weeping eyes*, and *trembling hearts*; they are still *alive without the Law*; they never walked *softly* with *Ahab*, or were under *Soul-trouble* with *Judas*; they fall short of the pangs and sense of Hypocrites; Oh! Oh! Oh! I pity these secure souls; how short will they fall of their hopes, and how farr short of Heaven?

Few sensible of Sathans working in them. Eph. 2. 2. Fourthly, *How few are sensible, that all this while the Devil works in them, as in his work-house? That he possesseth the heart of every unregenerate man? The strong man keeps the house, and so all is quiet. It was a sad day, when*

when the abomination of desolation should be
teen standing in the holy place ; but what are
abominable Men to abominable Devils ?
They did but exercise their cruelties on the
bodies of the *Jewes* , but how many Devils
have their walks in the hearts of natural men
and women ? If thou art in thy bloods , the
Devil hath entred into thee , as sure as ever
he entred into the heard of *Swine* , and so hur-
rieth thee into base lusts , as he carried them
headlong into the Sea.

CHAP. III.

Their want of Despair in Self.

IF Men are sensible of their sinne
and miserie, yet how many are going
about to estab^lish their own rightious-
ness? Though some are convinced
of the ugliness of sin, of the miserie
by sin; yet they are not fully con-
vinced, that the covenant of works requir-
eth perfect, personal, and constant obedience,
that it admits not of repentance, that it
accepts not of the will for the deed; but
curseth every one that continueth not in
all things, which are written in the Book
of the Law to do them, so that if
there be a failer by a vain thought, the con-
ditions

Few
humbled
Souls.
Rom. 10.3

Gal. 3.10:

Their want of saving Humiliation.

ditions of that covenant are broken ; and nothing , save *fearful expectations* , should seize on such a Soul . Few (I say) believe this ; but though they are bankrupt Children of *Adam* , yet they hope by their pedling Wares to set up again , and maintain themselves , without being beholden to any other , for the procuring of their salvation ; hence they pray , who were prayerless before ; hear , and (perhaps) with much diligence , who were wont to play away the Sabbath and Sermon time ; and reform in many things ; and now , *Soul* , *take thine ease* , *thou hast got laid up for many years* , yea for eternity ; thou art converted sure , and so think all the Neighbourhood ; O ! what a change is here ? The man was a Drunkard , not so now ; an Adulterer , a prophane *Belial* ; but now civilized , yea a devout man : *Serious* , that was *fluffy* before ; and *touching the righteousness which is*

Phil. 3. 6. *in the Law* , blameless . Now he is alive indeed ; his Conscience is *pacified* , which before troubled him ; he can bear the Word gladly , which before was *burthensome* to him ; he can pray with *affection* , and with some *delight* , when before all the Ordinances of Heaven were *tedious* and intollerable burthens to him . Now he thinks , Sure I have life within me , I am not dead . He sees not all this while , that he must have life from *without* , and ability from *without* : He doth

Psal. 38. 4. not yet say , *Mine iniquities are gone over mine head* , as an heavy burden , they are too

Psa. 40. 12 *heavy for me* . *Mine iniquities have taken hold upon*

upon me, so that I am not able to look up. No, no he can look up with confidence, and call God Father; and though sometimes he *pro- Job 12.*
vokes God, yet he is *secure*. He doth not
see that he is dead, i. e. damned, and *insuf- 2 Cor. 3.*
ficient as of himself to think any thing as of him-
self, but all his sufficiency is of God. He thinks
he is not utterly unable to make amends for
his sins, not quite dead, for he can pray, &c.
He sees not, that it is as easie to make new
Worlds, as to put up one acceptable Prayer
to God. He sees not, that he needs an Al-
mighty power to enable him to perform his
duties, and infinite satisfaction to discharge
him of his debts. He is somewhat sensible of
his danger by sin, but he eyes not him that is
mighty to save. He looks for help within, *Isa. 63.*
but not without. He sees no absolute ne-
cessity of Christ all this while. He sees not,
that all his righteousnesses are as filthy raggs in
Gods sight, and that all his duties fill up the
Catalogue of his sins. He sees not, that *there*
is no Salvation in any other, save Jesus Christ, *Acts 4.*
because *there is no other Name under Heaven*,
12. given among men, whereby we must be saved.
He hopes to goe to Heaven through doors of
his own, the door of Repentance, the door
of Reformation, the door of good Works, &c.
hence he takes hold of the mercy of God, and
the promises of pardon, *Let the wicked for- Isa. 55.*
sake his way, and the unrighteous man his
thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord,
and he will have mercy upon him, yea he will
abundantly pardon. "Thus have I done,

Their want of saving Humiliation.

“ (saith this awakened person) and now my
 “ Case is good. O! I would not be in mine
 “ old myres for a World: O! what a change
 “ is here? I was a careless Wretch, carelets
 “ of God, and my Soul, careless of praying,
 “ reading, hearing, &c. not so now. And
Matth. now that *the house, out of which the unclean*
 12. 43, *Spirit is gone, is swept and garnished,* he car-
 44, 45. *rieth it high, and little thinks he, that seven*
worse Spirits are entring in. This is the case
 of multitude of Professours, whom Christ
Luke will never seek nor save, for that they are not
 19. 10. *lost,* they are not succourless and helpless,
 they think they may save themselves from
 wrath to come. They see not, that there is
 a Satisfaction to be made to Divine Justice,
 which they cannot make; wherefore their
 hopes are from their reformations, not from
 Christ; their peace is from their performan-
 ces, not from Christs blood of atonement:
Luke *All these have I kept from my youth up.* Hence
 18. 21. he is confident, not from Christs coming under
the Law: hence he is diligent in Prayer, &c.
 but careless of the way of Faith; hence he
blesseth himself in his own performances, and
 is no way taken up with what Christ hath done
 and suffered for him. *Moses is magnified,*
 and *Christ is slighted:* Duties are set up, and
 Faith neglected: *Works advanced and cryed*
up, and *Faith is little heeded* or look'd after.
 How few are there, who count themselves
 wholly destitute of every good thing, that
 should make them acceptable unto God?
 They lay not the weight of Salvation upon the
 grace

grace of God by Jesus Christ, but upon somewhat that comes from themselves: they will have a Bridge of Duties, that shall carry them over the Gulph of eternal miserie: they hope to *quench Hell Fire* by their *tears* Alas! some years agoe, you might as well have drawn Water out of the Flint, as tears from them; but the case is altered: "I was blind, "but now I see the deserts of sin, which I "saw not before; I see it is a fearful thing to "sin against God, and now I bewail my sins, "and am sorry at heart for them; sure my "condition is mended, I thank God I am not "as other men, nor as once I was my self, "I hope by my tears to wash away my sins. All the while Christ lieth without doors, the Soul is a stranger to Faith in Christ, he sees not his insufficiencies, he sees not his unworthiness to goe to Heaven and Glory, he sees not his inability to think a good thought, he hopes without a Christ he can do something. If he did judge his condition hopelesse, he would tremble, and have no rest in himself, till God hath delivered him; he would see an absolute necessity of obtaining Christ and his righteousness, and he would be put off with nothing else. But O! how hard a work do Ministers find it, first to take off men from their sins, and then from confidence in their duties? We tell men, Christ will have no sharer in the glory of saving lost man; but people will at least have their works and Christ to divide the spoiles, to share in the glory of bringing back lost Souls to God. We ad-

Their miscarriages about Soul-troubles.

vise men to lay no weight on their duties, but to lean alone on Christ's merits ; but in vain, Christ saith, *If yee seek me, let these go their way*, these *duties* as well, as these *sins* ; but the deaf ear is turned, and we find it much easier to perswade men, their sins will damn them, then their duties, whilst Christ is there, by neglected.

CHAP. IV.

Their miscarriages about their Soul-troubles.

Miscarriages about Soul-troubles.

IF the Spirit of the Lord have convinced men of their danger by their sins, and their own righteousness ; that they shall see God angry with them, and if their Souls remain under trouble and disquiet ; yet are they not guilty of some, if not all, of the following miscarriages ?

Few justify God.

1. *How few are there that justify God ;* Few accept of the punishment of their iniquities, they do not clear God, as they should, from all unrighteousness. Commonly proud hearts swell and fume against these methods of God. Though the filthiness of their hearts be laid open before them, yet they fall not down upon

upon their faces in the acknowledgement of their unworthiness of mercy : few charge themselves, and acquit God. They cannot be brought to give God the glory of his righteousness, if he should condemn them to the pit of hell : they do not willingly and uprightly own the desert of damnation, and charge themselves with it, as their due portion, and most just inheritance. Few give their cheeks to him that smiteth, as the Church Lam. 3. did : they do not say, *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him*, or with Ezra, *thou hast punished us lesse than our iniquities have deserved*, or with Ezra 9. Daniel, *O Lord ! Righteousnesse belongeth unto thee ; but unto us confusion of face*. How Dan. 9. seldome do you hear Professours with this Confession in their mouths, “ Lord, I am thy creature, and thou mayst do with thy creature what pleaseth thee ; It pleased thee to put thine image on me, to create me up- Eccl. 7. right, but I have sought out many inventions, I have sold my self for nought, I have Isa. 52. preferred the Devils work before thine, and therefore thou mayst abhor me, and give me my portion among the damned crew, and if I feel some sparks of hell fire (in thy wrathfull present frowns) it is of thy rich patience and mercy, that they are but sparks ; if thou cast me off for ever, it is but what I have deserved long ago ; it is of the Lords mercy, that I was not hurried from the womb or cradle to hell, because of my native sinfulness, but wo is me,

“ I

"I have provoked the pure eyes of thy glorious Majesty dayes without number, I have
 "been a Rebel of a long standing against
 "thee, my will hath been justling and quar-
 "relling with thine these many years, and
 "therefore if I be sent to hell, *thou art*
Psa. 51. "righteous and *clear when thou judgest*, I can
 4. "blame none save my self, if I perish ever-
 "lastingly, though I have many fears and
 "sorrows on me; yet blessed be God, they
 "are not the sorrows of hell, thanks be to
 "the Lord, that I am not yet among the
 "damned ones, roaring in the Pit of hell.
 Few believe they deserve damnation; hence
 Souls are murmuring at any affliction, at the
 loss of an Husband, Child, Estate, &c. as if
 God had dealt hardly with them, in depriv-
 ing them thus.

Few wil- *How few Professours, when under Soul-*
 lingly un- *troubles, are willingly under them?* They see
 der Soul- not the advantage of having their *way bedg'd*
 trouble, *up with these thorns.* They do not receive the
Hos. 2. *Spirit of Bondage.* They do not accept this
 6. punishment; They take it not kindly at Gods
Rom. 8. hands. Their troubles are *involuntary*, few
 15. kindly works that I meet with among awake-
 ned and startled Professours; they are held
 in the chains against their will. How many
 are afraid of sorrow for sin? Some think it
 will spoyle good faces, and their beauty may
 be lost through their troubles; but others
 think it will bring them to despair, and there-
 fore farewell to such a Preacher; he is too
 terrible for their Souls. Hence *Soul* must
 have

have his *harp* to divert him, the Cards must be taken up again, some merry Books, some Romances must be read, perhaps a Play may be seen, jovial frothy Company must be called in, and all this, to divert the Soul from minding its danger, lest it be swallowed up of grief, or some unskillfull and unfaithfull Emperick shall be sent for, to sow pillows under him, that he may sleep the quieter. Few (*Daniel-like*) when their cogitations much *Dan. 7.* trouble them, so that their countenances are 28. changed in them, keep notwithstanding the matter in their hearts. How few are active in their Soul-troubles? Retire, and go alone that they may search the Scriptures, and ransack their hearts in order to contrition and humiliation of their hearts? How few are gladdened by any portion of Gods word, that brings their sinfulness and self-fulness to remembrance, and causeth any meltings of heart, and humblings of Souls under it? How do some Professours quarrel with their Ministers, and snarl at the Books, that give them trouble of Spirit?

3. *How few mourn for Sin upon Spiritual* Few accounts? That their God is dishonoured (their good and gracious God, who hath done so much for them, &c.) doth not chiefly cut their hearts; *Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight;* but perhaps they are troubled for wronging themselves, endangering themselves, &c. They cry as dogs: when they have done a fault, they fear the whip, and so they howle. } *Psalm. 51. 4.*

4. *How*

Few re-
forming
and be-
coming
mourners.

4. *How many Professors mourn for their sins, yet live in the continued practise of them?* Notwithstanding their tears; yet their hearts are in league with their lusts: Thus, like the Scolds at *Billingsgate*, they are soon out, soon in again with their lusts; but few whilst mourning for their sins are solicitous and carefull which way God may have satisfaction for the injuries, that have been done unto him: The mourning of many Professours last no longer than the trouble of Conscience: as soon as the guilt of sin is removed (as they hope,) their mourning ceaseth, though the strength of sin be as great as ever.

Few seek
comfort
aright.

5. *Among the multitudes professing Religion, how many seek for grace, in order to their comfort?* (Joy, Peace, Comfort, being their great end) but how few seek for comfort in order to grace?

Few
mourn for
unbelief.

6. *How few mourn for their slightings of Christ?* (It is more natural and so more easie to mourn for sins against the Law, than those against Christ and his Gospel;) Therefore if there be many tears shed for neglect of Prayer, for Theft, Perjury, &c. yet how few are found mourning for undervaluing and rejecting Christ and his Tenders? whose Soul cries out, "O! how unkind have I been to Christ? O! that he should come out of his Fathers Bosome for me, come under the Law, yea Dye for me; and yet I should keep him out of dores: that the Son of God, that the brightness of the Fathers glory, and the express Image of his person, the

Their miscarriages, as to believing in Christ. 29

"the upholder of all things by the word of his *Heb. 1. 3*
"power, when he had by himself purged our
"sins, and sat down on the right hand of the
"Majesty on high, should stoop so low, as *Rev. 3.*
"to stand at the door, and knock, and yet that *20.*
"I should not let him in; break heart, break
"into small dust, be trembling all over for
"thy unkindnesses to so great, so rich, so
"good a Friend. O wretch that I have been!
"What! more kindness to my Dog, my
"Cat. &c? If my Dog be whining at the
"door, he hath admittance, and yet thou
"shut out; O *I abhor myself in dust before*
"thee. *I meet with few of these mourners.*

CHAP. V.

*Their ignorance of Christ: their serving
their turns of Christ: their making base
capitulations with Christ.*

1. **H**OW many are ignorant of Christ, and Too too
of what use he is to perishing Souls? many ig-
They know no more the Gift of God, than *norant of*
the Samaritan Woman did: they know not
what an excellent gift Christ is, that he is *the* John 4.
Fountain of living Water, and therefore ask *10.*
nothing of him. It is one thing to hear of a
Christ, and another thing to know Christ. How
few

30 *Their miscarriages, as to believing in Christ.*

few know Christ to be their only Life? If you did believe, that *he that hath the Son*,
1 Jo. 5. *hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God*,
12. *hath not life: And that who so findeth me*

(Christ) *findeth life, and shall obtain favour*
Prov. 8. *of the Lord: But he that sinneth against me*

35, 36. (Christ) *wrongeth his own Soul; all they that*
hate me (Christ) love death: Upon such a
Conviction, what would you not give for
Life? Esau will part with his Birth-right, to
preserve his Life. The Woman will part
with all her Estate, to recover health, and
to secure her self from the grave. Of all
blessings we value Life mostly, but few have
such esteems of Christ. Few can say, as

Paul, *What things were gain to me, those I*
Phil. 3. *counted loss for Christ: yea doubtless, and I*

7, 8, 9. *count all things but loss, for the excellency of the*
knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom
I have suffered the loss of all things, and do
count them but dung, that I may win Christ;
and be found in him, not having mine own
righteousness, which is of the Law, but that
which is through the faith of Christ, the righ-
teousness which is of God by faith. I deter-

1 Cor.
2. 2. *mined not to know any thing, save Jesus Christ,*
and him crucified. Or with David, Whom

Psal. 73.
25. *have I in Heaven but thee? and there is none*
upon Earth that I desire besides thee. Few look

on Christ as the Original of their Life; that
they must live, move, and have their being in
Christ, and from Christ alone; that they are
dead without him; and hence their desires
are not after him. If you knew, that you

want

Their miscarriages, as to believing in Christ. 31

want Christ more than Bread and Water; then would you cry out, *Lord, give me Christ, None but Christ, None but Christ*, in him is my help, in him is my salvation. He is the Authour of all our good affections, and of all our gracious abilities; but alas! blind man sees him not in his usefulness. *What is thy Beloved more than another Beloved? He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty, that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men.* *Cant. 5.9*
Isa. 53. 2, 3.
Men must dye, and be damned, without a Christ; but they know it not, they know no good that Christ is, and no good that Christ brings.

Secondly, *How many serve their turns of* Many
Christ, close with Christ for their own ends? *serve*
When men have served their turnes, one of their
another, away they goe: so these, troubles *turns of*
they have, and ease they would have; they *Christ.*
have stayed off from Christ as long as they
could; they have tryed worldly Comforts,
they will not do; they have tryed Duties,
they will give no rest; and therefore, in the
terrors of their Spirits, *they must have Christ,*
so much of him, as may give them quiet and
rest. Men are weary of the bands and fetters,
wherein they are held under the Law; they
would fain be delivered from Sathan that tor-
ments them, and from the sins that now stare
them in the face; they groan under the weight
of the wrath of God, but not under the body
of sin; Sathan as a *Tormentour* is un-welcome,
but as a *Tempter* is still liked well enough.

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“O! I am afraid I shall to Hell. O! if
 “there be no other way to escape, but
 “through Christ, O! then for a Christ,
 “then Sermons and Ministers are welcome,
 “in hopes of bringing in (not so much a
 “Christ, as) peace, and comfort to the
 “troubled Spirit. So that men use Christ as
 sick men take meat, not for love of it, or
 liking to it (for their Stomachs rise against
 it) but for fear of death, which makes them
 force themselves to eat. Though many come
 to Christ, it is by constraint, not willingly;
 not with delight, not as an healthy man
 comes to a full table, to feed with pleasure.
*Many to avoid a greater mischief, to avoid
 damnation; to avoid eternal torments will to
 Christ in their sore extremities: they will then
 make large confessions, take up great resolu-
 tions against their sins, pray to God, and
 with vehemency and constancy, so as they
 never prayed before; but upon ease to the
 impostumed matter, upon recoveries out of
 their troubles, they become if not profane,
 yet worldly and negligent of Christ, his
 Person, his Laws, his Concernments. They
 have of Christ what they came for: They
 come to Christ, as some come to Shops;
 not to have all in the Shop; but what
 they immediately want: They want com-
 fort, and therefore they venture as the
 Leapers to the Camp of the Syrians, they
 had no love to them, they counted them their
 Enemies; but if we stay here, we perish; or
 as Ladies use Litters, to carry them over the
 dirt;*

dirt ; or as we use a Penthouse, during the Storm, and then Farewell ; or as *Passengers* the Boat, they cry vehemently *a Boat, a Boat*, and as soon as they are Ferryed over the deep, farewell to the Boat ; they think no more of it. *When he slew them, then they sought him : Psal. 78. and they returned and enquired early after God.* 34. Then, never before, and never after. Undoubtedly, multitudes have been *affrighted* to Christ, who were never truly and thoroughly converted to him ; and have left their Sins from *compulsion* or their *judgement*, not from the *propension* of their *will* ; not from any *love* they have borne to *Christ* : they *love* to be *safe*, but still *hate* to be *holy*. O ! O ! how many are herein deluded, who have pretended a great deal of love to Christ, whilst base Self, the love of pleasure and ease, and to be exempted from horrors and fears, hath been the Bias that hath drawn them to Christ : I appeal to thy Conscience ; whether Christ be valued, be look'd after, save in a strait ? When trouble is upon thee, then this Physician is sent for ; but when the pang is over, the Physicians company is too chargeable, is no way desirable ; the sooner he turns his back, the better. When Women are great with Child, and when, Men and Women both, hear it thunder, and see it lighten, when the Arrows of the Lord fly thick, and a *great mortality* is sweeping many to the Grave, O ! then how shall I get Christ ? then Books are read, Sermons heard and valued, Prayers not neglected ; but when the fears of death

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death are over, O! then *who will shew us any good?* Then *Redeem* lost time, not for God and Souls, but for the World; then head and ears in the world again, then secret Prayer is neglected; then the Bible lies in a dusty corner, not viewed, till the next storm arise; and then Christ must be awakened with, *Ma-*

ster, carest thou not that we perish? I will tell you what your Ministers have told you before, *Sin and the World were your Companions in days of health, ease and peace; and Christ your desire in cloudy days.* Is it not so? If Christ in the day as well as in the night, lies chief between thy breasts, thou hast cause to say, *Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me bless his Holy Name.* But I fear most pitch on Christ for themselves, and not for Christ. Christ in the time of Contagion shall go for something; but Christ in dayes of health and ease shall be valued no more than a meer *Chimera*, a *Cipher*, a *Nothing*. It is one thing to take Christ to pacifie the Conscience and another to take him to purify the heart. An *unquiet* Conscience is to most a greater burden, than an *insensible*, *seared*, and *polluted* Conscience, than an *impure* heart. Oh! Repent of thy juglings with Christ. *They did flatter him with their mouths, and they lied unto him with their tongues.* They pretend to come to Christ, in order to *service and obedience*, when all the while they *serve themselves*

Base Ca- on Christ.

pitulations with Christ.

Thirdly, *How many have base Capitulations with Christ? Many come running to Christ, and*

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and ask him, (as the man in the Gospel)
Good Master, what shall I do, that I may in-
herit eternal life? Christ tells him and them, *Mark*
10. 17
Goe thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast; and *21, 22*
give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure
in Heaven, and come, take up the Cross, and
follow me; But as he, so they are discontent-
ed, And he was sad at that saying, and went
away grieved, for he had great Possessions.
Undoubtedly many Hypocrites have some
glimpse of Christs glory, and they run to
Christ, whilst others deride him; but they
like not the Price that Christ sets; They would
have Christ on their own terms. Christs terms
are to have the Heart; My Son, give me *Prov.*
thy heart: Do not lend it only, but give; give *23. 26.*
it cheerfully, give it presently, give me it now:
Now, that it is called to day, To day, if ye *Heb. 3.*
will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as *7, 8.*
in the provocation. Give me thy heart, to be
framed and fashioned by me, to be stamped
and sealed by me; be no longer thine own:
I will not be content thou lend me thy heart
for a Sabbath; or for a day of Prayer, and
then that thou call for thine heart again, and
bestow it upon thy lusts; give me thine
heart; and do not sell it for base ends, for
base respects; give me thine heart, do not
keep it to thy self; lay up and leave thine heart
in my hand, for me to keep it for thee. But
alas! how shamefully do we break with
Christ? We would live as we list, and do as we
list. We are content to give Christ the body,
the outward man, the ear, the tongue, the
C 2 head;

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head, &c. but we reserve our hearts for the service of the World and of Sin: or if we are perswaded to give the heart; yet it is but a divided heart, not the whole heart, but a piece of it. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart*, saith Christ; but Pride, Mat. 22. 37. Covetousness, and Voluptuousness would fain have a share; hence no full closings between Christ and many Professors; Christ and they part. They, as some Customers, seem to commend the wares, but they like their money better. Few see themselves so miserable without a Christ, as to come up to the price. Their cursed Leagues with base Lulls bind them so fast in Chains, that they cannot, they will not come up to Christs proposals, to Christs demands; they will treat with Christ on no other terms, unless they may have the pleasures of Sin, and may fulfill the lusts of the flesh; but if Conscience be disquieted, and troublesome, then they make new offers; *they will leave many sins, they will except but one*; There is but *one* exception they have, and if that may be accepted, then they are Christs; they have but *one* reserve. These Swine are contented to escape 2 Pet. 2. the pollutions of the World, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, so 20, 22. they may have one mire to return to, and wallow in. If Christ will stoop to these terms, then welcome Christ; if *one sin* and *Christ* may share the heart betwixt them, the man is contented; but few are contented, that *every knee should bow*, that *every sin* be parted from.

The

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37

The Lord be mercifull to me, If I bow in the house of Rimmon. No, saith Christ, *All, or none.* If the Conscience be not quiet upon this; then, as Marriners throw overboard their goods, their Jewels, their Bales of Silk, and other pleasant wares in a Tempest, to ease the Vessel, which they wish for in a Calm, and labour to fetch up again, if it be possible, when the Storm is over: *So many Professours will part from all the practice of sin, throw all over-board, as the Marriners did Jonah, though much against their wills, in hopes of riding out the storm, and then wish for their lusts again, yea with the Dog, 2 Pet. 24 return unto the Vomit, and with the Sow to 22. wallow in the Mire.* Doubtless many, (like him, who had a mind to his Kinsman's land, and would have paid the purchase-money, but liked not the terms of marrying *Ruth*.) They would have Christ buy the purchase of their duties: they hope by the Stock of Prayers, Tears, and Obedience to purchase Christ; but will not match with Christ, and have the Inheritance by that way of conveyance. That man liked *Ruth's means*, but not *Ruth's person*, and many like somewhat of Christ, but not his *Person*, not *all* of Christ: they like Christ's pleasant *Summers*, but not his pinching *Winters*; love and like his *Heaven*, but not his severe *Commandements*; they like his *Sacrifice*, but not his *Service*. Many *Peddling Customers* Christ hath, but few, very few, who will come roundly up to Christs offers, and take all off his hands. They would take

C 3

off

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off his *Mercy*, his *Peace*, his *Righteousness*; but not his *Spirit*, his *Grace*, his *Holiness*, &c.

What faith Christ? "If you will have my
" *Comforts*, you must have *Me* too; if my
" *Pardons*, my *Person* too; you must take
" *Me*, as well as *Mine*; you must have *Me*,
" as well as my *Heaven*. This makes many go
away sorrowfull. Again, "If you will have me
" (saith Christ) you must be at some cost,
" at some pains and trouble to enjoy me:
" nothing of *Me*, or *Mine* is got without
" difficulty and industry; your cold *Prayers*
" must not suffice, your lazy hearings are not
" enough: you must watch your hearts all the
" day long, you must make a Covenant with
" your eyes, and keep your lips, as with a
" bridle. Are ye so contented? Oh! no
" (saith the slothfull Professour) I would go
" to Heaven on a Feather-bed, I would be
" contented to Pray now and then, Morning
" and Evening, so I may be at my own dis-
" pose all the following hours. Hearken (O

Isa. 45. " Daughter) and consider and encline thine ear;
10, 11. " forget also thine own people, and thy Fathers
" house. So shall the King greatly desire thy
" beauty; for he is thy Lord, and worship thou
" him. Three *Alls* I expect you part with
" (saith Christ.) 1. All your sinfull lusts, all
" the wayes of the old *Adam*: Our *Fathers*
" house. Ever since *Adams* apostasy, God
" and man have parted houses. Ever since,
" our *Fathers* house is an house of ill man-
Isa. 55. " ners, an house of sin and wickedness. Let
7. " the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighte-
" ous

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“ous man his thoughts : and let him return un-
“to the Lord , and he will have mercy upon
“him ; and to our God , for he will abundantly
“ly pardon. 2. All your worldly advantages.
“By faith Moses when he was come to years, re- Hebr.
“fused to be called the Son of Pharaoh's daugh- II. 24,
“ter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with 25, 26.
“the people of God , than to enjoy the pleasures
“of sin for a season ; esteeming the reproach of
“Christ greater riches than the treasures in E-
“gypt ; for he had respect unto the recompence
“of the reward. If any man come to me, and Luk. 14.
“hate not his Father and Mother , and Wife , 26.
“and Children, and Brethren, and Sisters, yea
“and his own life also , he cannot be my Disci-
“ple. He that hath all these must be ready
“to part with all ; they are joyn'd not dis-
“junctively , but copulatively. 3. All self,
“self-will, self-righteousness, self-sufficien-
“cies , self-confidences, and self-seisings.
“But, Oh ! how do many pretenders to
“Christ hate these Proposals ? I can tell you
“what many of your terms are ; I will have
“a Christ, if I may live as I list , and love as I
“list, and walk as I list ; Ile indent with
“Christ to make much of him when my Con-
“science gnaws and troubles me , so I may
“but dismiss him, when I have sung Lullaby
“to Conscience.



CHAP. VI.

Their delays to close with Christ.

Many de- 4ly. **H**ow many do delay in their coming to
 layers to believe. *Christ?* And O! what indignities
 are herein put upon Christ? How long doth
 he stand at the dores of sinners, ere they let
 him in. *My head* (saith Christ,) *is filled with*
dew, and my locks with the drops of the night,
Though he limit sinners to a day, To day if
ye will hear his voice, &c. Though our life be
even a vapour that appeareth for a little time,
and then vanisheth away, ready every moment
to expire; though we must needs perish and
be damned, if we believe not in him before
we dye; He that believeth not, shall be dam-
ned; though now is the accepted time; though
the Spirit may never invite more: My spirit
shall not alwayes strive with man; though we
are not sure of one day of grace more; yet how
do many hazard their eternity rather than
they will be yet beholding to Christ for Life
and Salvation? Though they may have his
Righteousness, his Redemption, his Spirit,
his Image, his Heaven, his Glory, his Love,
his Honours, his Inheritance by coming to
him; yet what trifling delays are mens hearts
 filled

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filled with? Though they are actually condemned by the Law for their Capital Offences, for high Treason against the Majesty of Heaven, and pardons be offered freely by Jesus Christ unto them, if they will but accept of *him* and *them*, yet so is Christ fall'n in the account of them, who yet are nominal Christians, that they will hazard their Souls, rather than they will yet be so much behold-ing to Christ. This desperate enmity against Christ and his offers is the condemning sin. *This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved Darkness rather than Light, because their deeds were evil.* All other sins are nothing to this; what? when God hath limited thee to *A day*, wilt thou, darest thou carelessly mispend that *one day*, when thou art not sure of another? Believe it, your trifling *delays* are more hideous sins, do more stain your souls, and provoke God, than drunkenness and unnatural lusts in such, as never had one of your Calls. How darest thou, having so many wayes transgressed against this God, having provoked him to wrath by so frequent breaches of his Holy Law, to add to all these iniquities thy trifling delays of coming into Christ, that thou maist be pardoned? How durst thou, when lying under the wrath of a justly incensed God, send away Christ as *Felix* did *Paul*, with *Go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee*: when (wretch) is that *convenient season*? Is it then, when thou hast served the Devil some weeks, months, or years

*Joh. 3.
19.*

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2 Thes.
17. 8.

years longer? *When* thou hast spent all the *flowre* of thy *time* and strength in the service of Hell? Must *Then* Christ have the *dregs* of thy *time*? Must he have nothing but *Sathans* *leavings*? O! Doubtless for these delays is Christs wrath ready to be powred out upon this Nation to the uttermost. *The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ*: By delaying to hearken to Christs calls and invitations thou tellest Christ to his face, that he is not altogether lovely, that he is not the fairest of ten thousand, that there is somewhat in Sins service and the Devils, that is more desirable than what can be had in Christs. And canst thou imagine such *Blasphemy*, viz. (To tell Christ to his face, that thou valuest thy lusts above the enjoyment of him,) is not provoking? O! if ever these come over fully to Christ, if Christs patience be extended yet longer, and they be at length wone to him; How will they befool themselves that they came into Christs service no sooner? *Nimis sero te amavi.* "O! I have loved thee too late. Oh the Joy, the unspeakable Joy
"I have lost! Oh the peace, that I might have
"had! Oh the assurance of Gods love, that
"my Soul might have been filled with! Oh
"the experiences of the grace of God, that I
"might have had, if I had come into Christ
"on Christs first call and intreaty! Oh the
"opportunities of service, that I might have
"had, when the marrow was in my bones,
" when

Their miscarriages, as to believing in Christ. 43

“when I was young and fresh for duty! Oh!
“How *good* had it been if I had *born* Christs *Lam.*
“*yoke* (sooner) in my *youth*? O the many 3. 27.
“sins that I have been guilty of! Oh! how
“long *withstood* I the *Grace* of God, and
“grieved the *Spirit* of God? Oh! What a
“burden was I to Christs Ministers, and
“much more to Christ himself? But
God alone knows, how soon his Spirit
shall cease striving with these poor Souls,
and how long they shall be within a
capacity of obeying the Heavenly Call.
The *Jewes* have a Rule, that if a man vows
any service to God before he dyes, he must
do it presently, because he may dye present-
ly. *Death* and *Hell* are described coming on *Rev. 6. 8.*
Horseback, in full speed; Ask thy self there-
fore *Jeremiah's* question, *Can I out-run or Jer. 12.*
escape these Horsemen? However, through 5.
the great and wonderful averseness there is in
mens hearts from Christ, they *stay* and *linger*,
like *Lot* in *Sodom*, that if God do not work a
miracle upon them, and for them, they will
perish in the flames. They know what the
foolish Virgins lost by their delays; all is one,
no coming to Christ, as long as possibly they
can make any shift to live without him, and
until an Almighty power exert it self on their
Souls, to make them willing of a Christ. One
hath a *Wife*, another a *Yoke* of *Oxen*, all of
them some *business* or other to detain them for
the *present* from Christ. They do not *utterly*
dany to come, but *at present* they have such
employments, as that they have no present
free-

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freedome to wait upon him. The Son of God must dance attendance on them, they must be banqueting with the *Devil within*, and *Christ must stand without*, yea wait their leasure, till they receive him in. There are *several sorts* of these *delaying Professours*.

Delays
to come
to Christ.

From
love to
worldly
Lusts.

1. *Some (and they the worst sort) from their great love to their lusts, and to the comforts and sensualities of this life, which they fear, when they are under Christs yoke, they shall be bereaved of, delay coming to Christ.* Sin hath so rooted it self in their hearts and affections, that they are loth to take a final farewell thereof, loth to mortifie their earthly members; Sin is so prevalent with them, that they had rather part from their *right eye, hand, and foot*, than part from their *sins*; hence they *choak* their *Convictions* what they can, *admit* of any *pleasures and diversions*, to *wear out* the *impressions* that are made in their *Consciences*, that they may still lodge *sin* in their *bosomes*, and not come to Christ; hence they labour to *quench the Spirit of God*, and through the prevails of spiritual sloth, *will not use the means*, whereby they may be fully converted to Christ. They pretend *they are desirous of Christ*, only they *doubt whether Christ is willing* to receive them; but that which lieth at the bottom is this, they are *loth to leave their darling lusts*, and *loth to pray and watch their hearts*, and to do what God requires and expects at their hands, in order to Conversion. You may imagine God is highly provoked hereby; for God to send his Son unto

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unto you, the best Jewel that ever lay in his bosome, and for you to neglect and undervalue him, and preferre swinish lusts before him, 'tis a plain argument, that you never saw sin aright in its nature and effects, and that you do not credit God in his discoveries of the glory of his Son. You do not believe you are so miserable without a Christ, as indeed you are; you slight the greatest Gift, that ever God conferr'd upon the children of men; you make void the great counsels of God, all the thoughts of his wisdom and grace, in contriving such a way, as by Jesus Christ, to save you from wrath to come; you also frustrate the expectations of God, for Surely (saith God) they will reverence my Son; whereas, by your trifling delays, you tell God and men, that you believe not any advantage you shall have by the Son of God; you think it will be to your loss, to receive in the Lord of glory. He tells you, *Ye shall be abundantly satisfied with the farnesse of his House, and ye shall drink of the Rivers of his Pleasures.* He tells you, *He hath gathered his Myrrh, with his Spices; He hath wine, milk, and honey.* You cry out, *I have put off my Coat, how shall I put it on, &c.* A little more slumber in the Devil's Lap, a little more folding of the hands to sleep. You are told of Joies unspeakable, and full of glory; of Peace that passeth all understanding; of eternal Life by knowing Christ. You are told, you can never be reconciled unto God, but by Christ; that he must end all Controversies between Christ, and your Souls; that He is able

Mat. 21. 37.
Psal. 36. 8.
Cant. 5. 1, 3.
Prov. 24. 33.
1 Pet. 1. 8.
Phil. 4. 7
John 17. 3.

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- Hebr. 7. able to save to the uttermost, all that come unto
 25. God by him; that His Word is more desirable
 Psal. 19. than gold, yea, than much fine gold. But all
 10. this prevails not with you. When I have a
 AEs. 24. convenient Season; &c. Yet I cannot, I pray
 25. have me excused. He tells you, If you believe
 Luke not that I am he, you shall dye in your sins; and
 14. 18. that he that believeth not the Son, shall not see
 Jo. 8. 24. life, but the wrath of God abideth on him, yet
 Jo. 3. 36. delays still. He tells you, Blessed is the
 Pro. 8. man that heareth me, and who so findeth me,
 34. 35. findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord.
 Rev. 3. Behold, I stand at the door and knock, if any
 20. man hear my voice, and open the door, I will
 Jo. 6. 35 come to him, and will sup with him, and he
 with me. I am the Bread of Life, he that
 believeth on me, shall never hunger, and he that
 Epbes. 2. you, Of Strangers and enemies, you shall be-
 19. come Children, and yet this seems a light mat-
 Jo. 1. 12 ter, to be so near related to the King of
 Kings. Is not this Englands great Provoca-
 Rom. 8. 1 tion, to refuse so great an honour and dig-
 nity? He assures you, There is no Condemna-
 tion to them that are in Christ. And shall he
 not condemn Wretches, that slight the Par-
 dons that are offered to them? These must
 Hebr. expect a double wrath. Of how much forer
 10. 29. punishment shall they be thought worthy, &c?
 2. Others, in imitation of the old Adam,
 From be- believe the Devil before God, credit his Sug-
 lieving gestions, beyond all Gods Discoveries. O!
 Satan be- fore God, O! What a black grain'd Sin is this? Saith the
 Devil, You have sinned against Light, and
 there-

Their miscarriages, as to believing in Christ. 47

therefore Christ will not favour you: Saith God, *Let the wicked forsake his way, and his* Isa. 55.7 *thoughts, and I will abundantly pardon.* Saith the Devil, You have sinned more than others, you have provoked God exceedingly, and therefore never hope for saving benefit by Christs death: Saith God, *Cease to do evil, learn to do well, come now, and let us reason* Isa. 1. *together, though your sins be as scarlet, they* 16, 17. *shall be as white as snow.* Saith the Devil, You 18. have sinned not only against the Law, but against the Gospel, you have neglected Christ: Saith God, *Every sin against the Son of man* Luke *shall be forgiven.* Saith the Devil, You have 12. 10. no right to Christ, it is in vain to come: Saith God, *Whosoever believeth shall not perish.* Saith Jo. 3. 16 the Devil, Your day of grace is past: Saith God, *To day, whilst it is called to day, hear* Hebr. 3. *his voice.* Saith the Devil, God never in- 7, 13. tended you good, you are a Vessel of Dishonour: Saith God, *As I live, I desire not* Ezek. *the death of a sinner, but that he turn and live.* 33. 11. Now I pray consider, whether God takes it kindly at your hands, that you should lay John 8. more weight on the *Father of Lyes*, than on 44. *the faithful God, who hath promised, and can-* Titus 1. *not lye; who must cease to be God in that ve-* 2. *ry moment, wherein he ceaseth to be true.* You perhaps deceive your selves with the *Pharisees Comforts, You are not as these Har-* Luke *lots, as these Publicans, no Drunkards, &c.* 18. 11. *but little think that you put the Lye upon God. You believe the Enemy more than the Friend, O! what a Provocation is this?*

3. Others,

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Through 3. Others, through the pride of their hearts,
Pride. will not come (as yet) unto Christ. They have
Rom. 10. no mind to submit to the Righteousness of faith.
3. He is judged a proud man (without a Jury
sitting on him) who when Condemned will
not submit, will not stoop so low as to ac-
cept of a Pardon. I must indeed correct my
self, men are willing to be justified; but
they would have their duties to purchase their
peace and the favour of God: they scorn to
be beholding to Christ. Thousands will dye
and be damned rather than they will have a
pardon upon the sole account of *Christs Me-
rits and Obedience.* O the cursed Pride of the
heart! When will men cease to be wiser than
God? To limit God? When will men be
contented with Gods way and method of sa-
ving them by the blood of the Everlasting
Covenant? How dare men thus to prescribe
to the infinitely wise God? Is it not enough
for thee that *thy destruction is of thy self*? But
must thy Salvation be of thy self too? Is it
not enough that thou hast wounded thy self?
But wilt dye for ever, rather than be behold-
ing to a plaister of free grace? *Wilt be dam-
ned unless thou mayst be thine own Saviour?* God
is willing (So God loved the World, that he
gave his Son) Art thou so proud, as that
thou wilt not be beholding to God? Thou
wilt deserve, or have nothing. What
shall I say? Poor thou art, and yet proud,
thou hast nothing but wretchedness and mise-
ry, and yet thou art talking of a Purchase.
This is a provocation. *God resisteth the proud,*
especially

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especially the spiritually proud. He that is proud of his Clothes and Parentage, is not so contemptible in Gods eyes, as he that is proud of his Abilities, and so scorns to submit to Gods methods for his salvation by Christ and his righteousness alone.

4. Others, through their ignorance and weakness stay off from Christ, in hopes of working that, which cannot be wrought without a Christ. Were their hearts so humbled and melted; as such and such are; could they see all their sins subdued, were their hearts more fitted and prepared for to lodge so great a Friend, they would then close with the Promises; with Christ; whereas they should come to Christ, as soon as they apprehend they are poor, blind, and naked, for then he calls and invites. But alas! a sight of their wants, is a barr to their coming. They would have the *Fruit* first, and then the *Tree*; have their hearts purified, and then come to Christ (*Who is appointed by God to be Sanctification to them.*) God comes, by his Spirit, to convince them of their sinful nature and weakness, on purpose, that they seeing their necessity of Christ, might flye to him, as their *City of refuge*, and they are driven farther off by the sight of their sins and unworthiness. Whereas they should come to Christ, as to a *Magazine and Store-house*, and wait on him, in the use of means, for the broken heart, the pure heart, and all other spiritual mercies, which their Souls are yet destitute of, but they will not. *O faithless Generation!*

Through
hopes to
prepare
them-
selves,
and make
them-
selves
fit for
Christ.

Rev. 3.
17, 18.

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Mar. 9. 19. *How long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you?* Christ is put to the utmost of his patience, to bear with Unbelief.

Through seeming modesty. 5. *Others, through some kind of seeming modesty and tenderness, delay in their coming to Christ.* They are afraid of abusing the holiness and justice of God, if they should hope for any privilege in the blood of Christ, and mercies of God. "What mercy for me? me
 "a proud wretch, an unclean wretch, an ene-
 "my to God, a sligher of his Spirit? I de-
 "serve nothing but Hell, what Heaven for
 "me? I have affronted the Majesty of the
 "great God, and what? This God bestow a
 "Christ on me? Who can believe, that the
 "Just God, who turned down the glorious
 "Angells to Hell for one transgression, will
 "save me, who have committed more sins in
 "number, than the hairs on my head, than
 "the sands on the Sea shore? And what,
 "Mercy for me? Shall I have a Christ? Will
 "Christ accept of me, who have wronged
 "his Father and him for so many years toge-
 "ther? O! how long doth many an awak-
 "ned Soul hang in doubts and fears, ere it will
 "venture upon Christs graciousness alone; and
 "then, when the Soul hath long stood out,
 "the fears increase. "I have refused Christ so
 "long; to all my former transgressions I
 "have added this, my putting off Christ and
 "Salvation, when freely tendered, and
 "therefore sure I may not now come. And
 "now if Christ offers them mercy, still they
 "are fearful; they cannot believe that Christ
 is

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is serious and real. O! by these jealousies of Christ, you provoke him not a little. You are ready to say, This is too good news to be true: What is this, but to say, The Gospel is false, it is no true and faithful Word, 'tis not to be received with all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the World to save the greatest of sinners, blasphemers and persecutors of Christ? This is the great Sin that made Christ weep. You seldome find Christ weeping over the Idolaters of the World: I find him not weeping over Sodom and Gomorrah; but if Hierusalem refuse Christ, this makes him weep indeed. Hierusalem, Hierusalem, O if thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things that concern thy peace! Christ became a man of sorrows, was acquainted with griefs, &c. on hopes he should see of the travail of his Soul, and be satisfied.

Luke
19.42.

Isa. 53.3

It troubles Christ to see thee to goe about to make God a Liar to his Son, and to be denied thy loves and affections, for whose sake he submitted to his Fathers frowns. O! this sin of Unbelief hath great unkindness in it, and therefore no wonder if Christ upbraids for it.

Mar.

A man is properly upbraided, when as the kindness that hath been done to him, is revealed to him, together with his ungratefulness. But what shall I say? So farr are Souls from coming to Christ, that they do seldome bewail this sin, and seldome seek to God for power against it; and though men pretend they cannot come to Christ, yet the truth is, they will not (so Mr. Penner, in his willful

16. 144

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impunity hath abundantly proved.) The
immediate cause of your not coming is not a
natural deficiency, but a moral opposition of Spi-
rit against Christ.

CHAP. VII.

Their taking Christ partially : without con-
jugal affections : and without considering
the cost they may be at.

Many
take
Christ
partially.

51y. **I**F at length men are perswaded to
come to Christ, yet *they take him*
partially, both as King, Prophet,
and Priest. As their King. They
are contented he shall rule in ma-
ny things, but not in all. Their drudgery
to one or two lusts must be preferr'd before
Christs Scepter and Government : Some part
of Christs Yoak of Commandements they
will submit to ; but are not pleased that
Christ shall impose what they will; they pick
and choose : here they will obey, in another
thing I pray have me excused: few are brought
to say, *Lord what wilt thou have me to do?*
Any thing Lord, I am called to thy foot, as
the man of the East was, ready to trudge af-
ter thee to the ends of the Earth. *As their*
Prophet. Here they divide too; many things
they

they will learn of Christ, but they must partly *lean to their own understandings*, and be *taught for Doctrines, the Traditions of men.* They are also partial in their close with Christ *as their Priest.* They hope to be saved partly by his mediation, and partly by their own. As the Papists, so many Protestant Professours are for a divided Christ; few are for exalting Christ alone, so as to *renounce all other Lords, who have had Dominion over them,* and to count all other Teachers besides Christ as vain, absurd, unsound, and weak. Few renounce all their own righteousness, as dung, to put the Crown on Christs head alone, to make Christ their alone Mediatour, their alone Intercessour. No, they must have Cisterns of their own to keep their water in, and Sands of their own to build upon, and so Christ, the *Elect precious Stone*, is *refused by the Builders.* How many hope to be pardoned, partly by Christ, and partly by their Civility, and new Obedience? They lay their title to God, Heaven, and Glory, partly from Christs merits, and partly from their own deserts; few whose hopes are founded on Christ's satisfaction alone; but their hopes rise or fall according to what they do for him, rather than according to what he hath done and suffered for them: their hopes of acceptance with God are more from their reformations, than from Christs *entering within the Vail*: If they have peace of Conscience, they ascribe it to their Prayers, rather than to Christs Intercession, and if they Pray in

secret in their Closet, and in their Family too, when both before were neglected, they hope to pass by this Bridge to Heaven; but if it be too short, they will set Christ to patch up what is wanting, that they may land on the other shore. Hence it is that many Professors are much more consciencious in their obedience to the moral law, than they are to the *Law of Faith*, for that they hope their obedience will steed them as much, if not more than Jesus Christ; but if they understand that without *Faith there is no pleasing God*, then they will labour for a faith that may justify them, rather as an *act* of theirs, than in respect of the *object Christ*. Christ is still used only upon necessity, and to make up the want of somewhat else; but very few dare rest on the merits of Christ *alone*, so as to see *all their righteousness to be as filthy rags*. To few *Christ made of God Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption*. Let me ring a peal in your Ears, “You must receive Christ entirely, all Christ, and all of Christ, or you are not Christians, though you have a name to live. Christ is coming to distinguish names from things, and then you will curse the day you had the *Name*, or heard of the *Name*; you will have your portion with Hypocrites. These are indispensable terms on which Christ will insist, *All, or none*; Christ as a Refiner, as well as a Saviour; Christ as a Lord, as well as a Sacrifice.

Totum
Christum
et totum
Christi.

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Sixthly. If men are perswaded in the horrors of their Spirits to take Christ as Priest, Prophet and King, as a meer shift, to shift off their troubles and sorrows, and their sins (the occasions of them;) yet *their hearts stand off from Christ, as an Husband*, they have not conjugal affections to him, their hearts are not brought over to him, they receive him not into their bosomes, into their choicest affections all this while. There is still some secret lust more precious than Christ; he is not the chief Corner-Stone, whereas to them that believe he is precious, exceeding precious. Few, like *Paul*, determine to know nothing else save Christ, and him Crucified. One Christ was enough to take up *Pauls* thoughts to eternity; he did not care what he was ignorant of, so he knew Christ. Though he was brought up at *Gama-liels* feet, he laid down all his knowledge at *Christ's* feet.

I. *Are your hearts so drawn to Christ, as to count him the most necessary good in all the world?* And all other things to be but adjuncts, so that you are able to live without them, but not without Christ? Liberty is sweet to a believer; but he can live in a Prison, yea and live merrily too, he can sing there, if Christ be within the grate: Bread is sweet, but he can live in a Wilderness (a desolate howling desert) and sing there too, as *Moses* did, if Christ be there, yea and prefer it before Canaan. *If thy Presences go not with us, carry us not hence.* A Wilderness

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with Christ is more precious than a *Canaan* without him. If ye were through Believers, the World would not be accounted among the Necessaries. *One thing is necessary*, One, not many. Other things may divert, or may a little refresh, but Christ is the Necessary.

yea, the only good 2. *Is he in a sense the only good to your Soul?* Is nothing else good separated from Christ? give a Believer what you will without Christ; it weighs nothing, he droops, as the Mary-gold, when the Sun withdraws. What is all this whilst I am Christless? There is none good but Christ. Riches are miscall'd goods: they are not good sure in their reference as they relate to Christ, as they come from Christ, from that bosome of love, and as they advance Christ, and bring Christ and the Soul to nearer Communion. If the World in its glory, splendour, and fulness, hinder communion with Christ, by deadning, flatning, and distracting the heart, it becomes a burthen: He is burthened with friends, relations, enjoyments of all sorts, that rob him of Christ, that eclipse the face of the Sun of Righteousness, through their unhappy interposals. *What was gain is counted loss.* As he enjoyeth much or little of Christ, thereafter he laughs, or weeps; he riseth or falleth. In Christ are Riches, honours and friends: yea Prayers, Sermons, Sacraments, &c. *The Lord is the Temple;* Col. 3. He is *all in all*; He is all things, and in all things, not only by way of merit, whatever they

Their miscarriages, as to believing in Christ. 57

they have, or expect, is on Christs account; nor only *by way of conveyance*, through him we have all good communicated; nor only *by way of causality*, as he worketh all in all; but he is all *virtually*, he is instead of all things to them, he makes up the defect of all things. If no Estate, no Friends, no Liberty, no Health, no Comfort, &c. yet the Believer wanteth nothing: *As having nothing, and yet possessing all things.* Thus the Woman told the Persecutour, when he threatned her, to deprive her of her Husband, *Christ is my Husband.* Professours, look to your hearts, to your affections, and then you will have cause to cry, *My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me, I am a dry tree.* 2 Cor. 6. 10. Isa. 24. 16. 56. 3.

Seventhly, *How few Christians have, in their closing with Christ, considered the Cost they may be at?* They were told of the Cross, but the Cross was at a great distance, and things, when remote, seem little. How many little studied the import of that word Cross? What a *shameful, painful, tedious death* it imports? Something of trouble they would undergoe for Christ, but really they never thought of dying for Christ, of spilling their hearts blood for Christ: So that they did not close with Christ *understandingly*, either they were ignorant of Christs person, or of the *consequents* of closing with him; that they should be *hated of all men* for his Names sake; that they must *through much tribulation* enter into his Kingdom; that they shall be *put out of the Synagogues*, and that the time *cometh,* Few consider the Cost beforehand. Mat 10. 22. Acts 14. 22.

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- Jo. 16. 2.* cometh, that whosoever killeth them, will think that he doth God service. Hence when unexpectedly the rain descends, the floods come, and the winds blow and beat upon their houses, (the stately spiritual buildings, which they have been erecting) they do not only totter, but fall, and great is their fall. Even Cedars are taken up by the roots. How many in such times put away a good Conscience, and concerning Faith have made ship-wrack? How many are Trees, whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots? They see not the riches of Christ will make them amends for all these losses and perills: they cannot ballance the troubles of the Flesh with the comforts of the Spirit; the present evil things, with the future inheritance in Heaven: the Temptations they meet with are unexpected. They are like some Ladies, that put forth to Sea for pleasure; they launch forth towards Christ, but as the King of Navarre, who said, he would not venture farther, than he could quickly retreat, in case of danger. The Storm makes them return to their Harbour; yea, with the Dogg to the vomit, and the Sow to the mire. These poor Souls (O that my heart could bleed for them) were willing to come up to some of Christs terms, to lose a little, nay, to suffer many things, but they cannot endure to lose Life. O my Soul! weep in secret for them, when thou considerest, that the Children of the Kingdom (Church-Members) shall be cast out into utter darkness, there shall be weeping and
- Mat. 7. 27.*
- 1 Tim. 1. 19.*
- Jude V. 12.*
- 3 Pet. 2. 22.*
- Gal. 3. 4.*
- Mat. 8. 12.*

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and gnashing of teeth. God will not abate a *punctum* of what he requires, he expects that *Matth.*
we take up the Cross daily, that we hate Life *5. 18.*
it self, as well as whatsoever else is near and *Luke*
dear unto us. The Conditions imposed on *9. 23.*
his fallen Creatures are irreverfible, he will *Luke*
never floop lower. O! this makes many a *14. 26.*
man to goe away forrowful. I befeech the
Reader to goe over with the work of Conversion
again, now that the Cross is in fight, now
that Tribulation arifeth; Now let him fee,
whether Chrift is better than Name, Liberty,
Friends, Relations, Lively-hood, and Life
it felf; and whether he can believe, that *Luke*
that will fave his life, fhall lofe it, and he that *9. 24.*
will lofe his life for Chriffs fake, fhall find it,
and that with advantage.

CHAP. VIII.

*Their fhuffling together false Signes of
clofing with Chrift,*

8ly. **H**OW do many Profefours shuffle to-
gether a company of false Signes of Many
clofing with Chrift? How do they count them reft in
true and infallible, which are but question-false
able; yea, which have been found in un- Signes of
found Hypocritical hearts; and fo deceive clofing
them- Chrift.

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Their ground- Iess Pleas, themselves, as if they had a Christ, and real Grace within them? How do they live upon these Signes comfortably all their dayes without a Christ? Excuse me, if I bring in their Pleas, and answer them briefly.

I Sam. 10. 9. 1. I am changed from what I was, nay, *changed inwardly.* So was Saul, *And it was so, that when he had turned his back to goe from Samuel, God gave him another heart.* Thou mayest have another heart, and yet not a new heart.

2. I have extraordinary Gifts: I was dull, unable to speak of God, tongue-tyed among the Saints; but I can now hold a discourse with them, and manage some of the highest services, as well as they. Might not Saul say so much for himself? had not he the Spirit of Prophesie to admiration? When a company of **I Sam. 10. 10,** *Prophets met him, the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them: Then the people said one to another, What is this that is come to the Son of Kish? Is Saul also among the Prophets? The Spirit of God was upon him also at another time, and he went on, and prophesied, until he came to Naioth in Ramah; and he stript off his clothes also, and prophesied before Samuel in like manner, and lay down naked all that day, and all that night. He was so great a Proficient, that (as one observes) As soon as he was admitted into the Society, he commeneed Doctor, and prophesied with the best of them: They stood and prophesied, he went on, he could run and prophesie; yea, he was so full of the Spirit of Prophesie, that he neither*

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neither eat, nor drank, nor slept, nor rose; but lay down naked all the day, and all the night; he was as in a trance all that while, and wanted neither meat, nor drink, nor clothes, nor sleep.

3. I was full of revenge, but now I am come to such a pitch of Religion, that I can pass by Offences; yea, pass them by, when I have an opportunity of punishing them that affront me. Had not Saul so much Religion? *The Children of Belial said, How shall this man save us? and they despised him, and brought him no Presents; but he held his peace. He bears much, that can bear being derided.* 1 Sam. 10. 27.

4. Though I am meek in mine own Cause, yet when the Name of God, and the Church of God suffer, I can be very much inflamed. So was hypocritical Saul, *When Nahash the Ammonite told the men of Jabesh, On this condition will I make a Covenant with you, that I may thrust out all your right eyes, and lay it for a reproach upon all Israel, the Spirit of God came upon Saul, when he heard those tidings, and his anger was kindled greatly.* 1 Sam. 11. 2, 6.

5. I am merciful to men, to mine Enemies, because God hath shewed me mercy. So was Saul, *And Saul said, There shall not a man be put to death this day, for this day the Lord hath wrought Salvation in Israel.* 1 Sam. 11. 13. Though he was incited to revenge, yet he would not.

6. When I have any Mercy from God, I see God in the Mercy, and is not this a good Sign? Truly no better than Saul had, *To day the Lord hath wrought Salvation in Israel.* 1 Sam. 11. 13.

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7. I engage God with me ; before I set upon any considerable Undertakings. Did not *Saul* so much? Then said I , the Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal , and I have not made Supplication to the Lord ; I forced my self therefore , and offered a burnt Offering. And *Saul* said unto *Ahiah*, Bring hither the Ark of God , &c. And *Saul* asked counsel of God , Shall I goe down after the Philistines?

1 Sam.
13. 12.

8. When I Pray , I look what becomes of my Prayer , and I suspend many of my Motions , till I have an Answer. *Saul* the Hypocrite went so farr ; he look'd after his Prayer , and would not goe down after the Philistines , because God answered him not that day.

1 Sam.
14. 37.

9. If I have no Answer to Prayer , I examine the Reason , and I am sure this is more than most Professours do. But not more than *Saul* did , When God answered him not that day , *Saul* said , Draw ye nigh hither all the chief of the people , and know and see where in this sin hath been this day.

1 Sam.
14. 37,
38.

10. I am troubled for other mens sins, and cannot but reprove sinners ; Is not this a Sign of Sincerity ? I answer, No , unless *Saul* were sincere : When he was told , the People eat the blood , he was troubled , and reprov'd them too ; He said , Ye have transgressed.

1 Sam.
14. 33.

11. My Zeal against Sin is such , that I punish it where-ever I find it ; I am impartial in my rebukes of Sin : my Children , as well as my Servants , are corrected , if they trespass against

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against the Lord. Hence I conclude mine estate is good. And so might Saul. *As the Lord liveth, who saveth Israel, though it (the sin) be in Jonathan my Son, he shall surely dye.* 1 Sam. 14. 29.

12. I conclude God loves me from a constant series of smiling Providences, that followeth all that I take in hand: I find that the Lord blest me in my goings out and comings in; whatsoever I do doth prosper. And had not Saul strange Successes and Victories? When Israel was so low, that they had no weapons for Warr, nor Smiths to make any, Saul took the Kingdom over Israel, and fought against all his Enemies on every side, &c. and whither soever he turned himself, he vexed them. 1 Sam. 14. 47.

13. I find a readiness to confess others better than my self; so did Saul with tears in his Eyes. *And Saul said, is this thy voice my Son David? And Saul lift up his voice, and wept, and he said to David, thou art more righteous than I.* 1 Sam. 24. 16, 17.

14. I continue my duties when I fear God hath rejected me; even in desertion I keep on worshipping. So did Saul, when Samuel told him, *God hath rejected thee*; he desired Samuel to turn again with him, that he might worship the Lord; and he prevailed with Samuel to turn again, and Saul worshiped the Lord. 1 Sam. 15. 25, 30, 31.

15. I see a beauty in the Church and People of God. So did Balaam. *How goodly are thy Tents, O Jacob, and thy Tabernacles, O Israel!*

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Numb. 24. 5, 6. el! As the Vallies are they spread forth, as Gardens by the Rivers sides, as the Trees, &c. which the Lord hath planted, and as Cedar trees besides the waters.

Numb. 24. 13. 16. I cannot for the greatest advantage be brought to sin against God. Neither could Balaam. If Balak wou'd give me his house full of Silver and Gold, I cannot go beyond the Commandement of the Lord, &c.

Numb. 24. 10. 17. I live up to the dictates of Conscience, though I hazard the displeasure of great men thereby. So did that Sorcerer; though Balaaks anger was kindled against Balaam, and he smote his hands together.

Numb. 23. 10. 18. I have some lights of another World, and I desire to spend an eternity with the Saints. So had Balaam, and did not he desire so much? Let me dye the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.

Acts 24. 25. 19. When I think of the day of Judgement, I am affected with it, whereas before I was sottish and secure. So was Felix. As he (Paul) reasoned of Righteousness, Temperance and Judgement to come, Felix trembled.

Rom. 2. 18, 19, 20, 24. 20. I am an Orthodox Protestant; so thou mayst be a Teacher too, thou mayst not only know Gods will, and approve the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the Law, but confident that thou thy self art a guide of the blind, a light of them, which are in darkness; an Instructor of the foolish, a Teacher of babes, which have the form of knowledge, and of the truth in the Law; and yet fall short of Christ, and of Heaven, yea the name of God may be

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be blasphemed among the Gentiles, through thee.

21. I am free from the scandalous evils of the times, So were they in Peter, They had escaped the pollutions of the world, yea and that *2 Pet. 2.* through the knowledge of Christ (which is more *20, 22.* than the moral Heathens ever had) and yet were dogs and swine still.

22. I live inoffensively, none can lay any thing to my charge. But was not Paul, whilst Christless, touching the Righteousness which is *Phil. 3.* in the Law blameless? At the same time he was *6.* Persecuting the Church of God.

23. I have obeyed the Commandements of God for a long time. I am not like a Mushroom, soon up, and soon vanishing; I am a constant Servant to the Commandements of God. So was the young man in the Gospel; he said unto Christ, *All these things I have kept from my* *Matth.* *youth up; what lack I yet?* *19, 20.*

24. I have enlargements in duties, and fastise not my self with ordinary duties, but make Conscience of extraordinary duties, I *Matth.* fast, and that oft. And did not the Pharisees *23. 14.* make long Prayer, and fast oft? *I fast twice in* *Luk. 18.* *the week,* *12.*

25. I have joyes in Ordinances. the word of the Lord is sweet and precious, I know the time when it was not so. But did not Herod bear the word of God gladly? Did he not see an excellency in John? Had he not his *Mar. 6.* Virtues and Graces in great esteem? Had he *20.* not a Reverend behaviour towards him? Did not he observe him, and care to please him?

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him? He heard him, and that gladly: He was much delighted in John's Preaching.

Ezek.
33.30. 26. Nay but I go farther, for I stir up others to frequent Sermons. So did the Elders of Israel, Come I pray you, and hear what is the word, that comes forth from the Lord, &c.

Mar. 6. 20. 27. I obey as well as hear; I hear in order to practise. And was not Herod conformable to John's Doctrine? though John Preached not placentia, he was a rough Preacher, a burning, as well as a shining light, yet the Text tells us, *he did many things.*

Matth.
7.28.
13.54. 28. When I hear the word, I am strangely taken with it. So were the people, when they heard Christ, they were astonished at his Doctrine.

Mar.
1.22.
11.18. 29. Many a time under a Sermon my knees and heart ake. So it was with Felix. As he reasoned of Righteousness, Temperance, &c. Felix trembled.

Isa. I. 15 30. But I Pray and Pray oft as well as hear, and therefore is it not well? It may be ill enough, if thou hast no better evidence. When you make many Prayers (when you multiply Prayer, when you add Prayer to Prayer) yet I will not hear.

Mat. 25. 31. There was a time, when I felt sin no more, than a dead man feels a mountain upon him; but now it is heavy; 'tis burthen-some. And was it not so to Cain? And Cain said unto the Lord, my punishment (or, mine iniquity) is greater than I can bear. Was it not so to Judas, when he repented himself and restor'd the thirty pieces of silver, saying
have

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have sinned, in that I have betrayed the Innocent blood, and went and hanged himself?

32. I have desires after grace, and am willing to be at cost for it. So the foolish Virgins. And the foolish (being awakened out of their security in their form of Godliness) said unto the wise, give us of your Oyl: yea they went to buy. They were willing to be at cost for the power of Godliness. *Math. 25. 8, 10*

33. I associate only with Gods people, yea with the purest and holiest. So did the foolish Virgins; they associated not only with Virgins, but with the wise Virgins. Both wise and foolish went out together to meet the Bride-grooms. *Math. 25. 1.*

34. I consult Ministers for my Soul, and have high attainments. But wherein dost thou go beyond those, of whom it is said, *They seek me daily, and delight to know my ways; 2. as a Nation that did Righteousness, and forsook not the Ordinance of their God: they ask of me the Ordinances of Justice: they take delight in approaching to God? Wherein dost thou go beyond those in the Hebrews, who were once enlightened, and had tasted of the Heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy-Ghost, and had tasted the good word of God, and the Powers of the world to come. If thou hast not better things than these, thou hast not savingly closed with Jesus Christ; for as yet thou hast nothing that accompanieth Salvation, from which Salvation cannot be seperated.* *Hebr. 6. 4, 5. Hebr. 6. 9.*

68 *Their miscarriages, as to believing in Christ.*

O ! I cannot but pittie these poor hearts , these *Almost-Christians*. Almost Christians , and Almost Saved. I may say they are *not farr from the Kingdome of God* , and yet in a sense they are *farther than any others*. Our *greatest difficulty* hath been to *undeceive these* , to *unchrist these* , I mean , to take off these figleaves , with which they have covered themselves , that they may come to Christ for clothing , and so prevent the appearing of their nakedness. O ! It is hard tough work to perswade a proud Pharisee , that all his Righteousness will not steed him , that he must fling away all , that he must have something else to shew for Heaven and Glory. O ! How have men fled in our faces , when we have told them , that yet they have nothing that is essential to a Christian , as a Christian , or which makes a Christian a Christian , no more than a picture hath of the essence of a man ? You may imagine a man , that hath bestowed 20 or 30 years in building , how loath is he to pull down all again ? Though he fears the foundation is but on the Sands ; he will rather venture , than begin all anew ; He is even ashamed to unravell all the Clue of his ungrounded confidences. What begin upon a new bottome ? No , not he ; and so Christ and he part. He takes his supposed grace to be a Christ , or at least , that there must be Christ , where such changes are , and so cries out , *Soul take thine ease , thou hast goods laid up for many years , yea for Eternity.*

CHAP.



CHAP. IX.

*Their Ungodliness : their Ignorance : their
Errours , etc.*

HAVE not many Professors been ungodly Professors
men, *unwissend*, men without worship? If Ungodli-
to deny or withhold any part of that respect
or honour, that is due unto God, be ungodli-
ness; how much ungodliness hath there been, *Jude 4:*
and is there still amongst us? Which of us hath
not been guilty of not giving God his right or
due honour? Have not we suck'd in many un-
godly Principles? As that it is in vain to worship
God, there is no happiness (comparable to
what the World doth afford) in communion
with God; Religion is but a notion and fancy;
Policy is the only Piety; This world must be
look'd after, whatever becomes of Conscience,
&c. Have not we been guilty of ungodly *Psal. 58.*
thoughts? have not we thought, that God is
not so harsh, but we may take liberty in sinning; *Job 22:*
that he taketh no notice of what we think, *speak 12, 13.*
and do, yea that there is no God? Have not *Psal. 14:*
we spoken ungodly word? have not we uttered
those very hard speeches which ungodly sinners
speak? Have not we spoken against Gods ser-
vants? yea have we been afraid to speak against

Their ungodliness.

his Servant Moses? And have not many of our deeds been *ungodly*; yea though we have not *ungodly committed them*? God hath always been sorely provoked by *ungodliness*; The
 2 Pet. 2. Flood swept away the World of the *Ungodly*; but yet we might have been *ungodly* under the Law, at a cheaper rate, than under the Gospel; because the Gospel gives us more clear, and certain notions, of Gods excellency and glory, and lays more obligations upon us to respect God, and therefore is called a doctrine according to godliness. The *ungodly* shall not stand in judgement, neither in the world to come, nor in this world. The day of Judgement is appointed on purpose to take vengeance of *ungodly* persons.

1 Tim.

6. 3.

Psa. 1. 5.

Jude 15.

Their
 Ignorance of
 God.

1 Cor.

15. 34.

John 4.

22.

Acts 17.

23.

First, Have not some Professors been, and still are, altogether ignorant of God? Some have not the knowledge of God, I speak this (saith the Apostle) to your shame. May it not be said to many of us, *Ye worship ye know not what*? Do not many Professours worship God upon no other account, than the Romans did their Jupiter, or the Ephesians their Diana, viz. because he is the God of the Nation wherein they were born; because he was their fore-Fathers God, because his worship is in credit, and because the Magistrate commands that God be worshipped? Have not we worshipped God by Tradition, more than out of Conviction of Judgement? Hath not our worship been to the unknown God? God is truly, in a Scripture sense, unknown to all, that do not know him experimentally and practically.

Etically. Now, have we *tasted and seen, that the Lord is gracious*? Have not we said, we knew God, and yet kept not his Commandments? *He that saith so, is a Liar, and the truth is not in him: Hereby know we that we know him; if we keep his Commandments.* If we do not thus know God, we are none of his Children; he hath no Child so little, but he knoweth his Father: *They shall all know me, from the least to the greatest.* Our being the People of God in Profession, will not secure us from ruine. *My People are destroyed for lack of Knowledge: The Lord Jesus will come in flaming Fire, to render vengeance on us; for he will so deal with all that know not God.*

Psal. 34
8.

1 Jo. 2.
4, 3.

Jer. 31
4.

Hof. 4 6
2 Thes.
1. 8.

Secondly, *How erroneous have been Professions*? None can be such a stranger to our *Israel*, as to be ignorant, that a Spirit of Delusion hath been let loose abroad, from *Dan* to *Beersheba*, so that the Pillars of Religion are shaken, the most concerning Truths questioned, it not exploded with scorn and contempt. “Have not some made God the Author of Sin? Have not others forgot that “they were Creatures; and have assumed the “liberty, or rather highest impudence, to “say, that they were Godded, and that the “fulness of the God-head doth dwell bodily “in every Saint, in the same measure as it did “in Christ Jesus, whilst he dwelt upon the “Earth? Nay, have not others affirmed, “Jesus Christ to be a Bastard? Have not others said, They were Christ, and would,

Their
Errors!

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"in the pride of their hearts , have others to
 "worship them? Have not some denied
 "Christs Deity, affirming, That he was not
 "God essentially, but only nominally; yea,
 "that his pure Nature was stained with Sin?
 "How many have denied the Trinity of Per-
 "sons? How many, under pretence that the
 "Law of Works binds not, have abrogated
 "all the Laws of Christ, and turned cursed
 "Libertines? How many have, under pre-
 "tence of advancing the Spirits testimony,
 "maintained Sanctification to be a dirty qua-
 "lification, and cryed down all marks and
 "signes? How many have held, that the
 "Doctrine of Repentance, Fasting, and Hu-
 "miliation, are too Legal for the Spirit of a
 "Christian? How many have denied Christs
 "sitting in a Body at the right hand of God?
 "How many have denied his Satisfaction and
 "Purchase? Have not some held, that there
 "is no Heaven, no Hell, no Resurrection
 "from the Dead, and that the Beast and Man
 "have one common end? How many have
 "been altogether for Inspirations, and pro-
 "fess'd themselves above the Sphere of all
 "Ordinances? How many have denied Wa-
 "ter-Baptism, the Supper, the Ministry,
 "yea the Scriptures of God? How many
 "have accounted it their highest Perfection,
 "to sin away all tenderness of Conscience;
 "and look'd upon themselves the more holy,
 "by how much Villany they could be guilty
 "of beyond others?

How

How can we refrain from weeping out our eyes, how should our ears tingle; to see and hear these Abominations? How hath the God of Truth been provoked by these cursed miscreants? What horrible affronts have been offered to the dread Majesty of God thereby? How many thousand Souls have perished by these Delusions? And what a dishonour hath come to the Christian Religion by reason thereof, I cannot express. Certainly (saith one) there is more deadly mischief, and higher offence to God in them, than in those practical evils, which honest hearts profess to abhor: These, as they are immediate fruit of our spiritual part, so they do more immediately strike at the God of Spirits in his truth and holiness: And as Religion is the highest Concernment of the Soul, so the depravation of Religion must needs be the most dangerous and damnable. When Hezekiah heard the blasphemies of Rabshakeh, it is said, He rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the House of the Lord, and said, This is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blasphemy. If an Assyrian Blasphemer was so great a troubler, what troublers are Nominal Christians, thus abusing their Profession, and the God they pretend to serve.

But alas! How little have we been affected with the Flood cast out of the Serpents mouth after the Woman? Though the Trumpet hath sounded, Woe, Woe, Woe, to the Inhabitants of the Earth, because of Spiritual Plagues; we have been puffed up, and have

Consider-
ations to
promote
mourning
for er-
rors.

Bp. Hall.

Professors
miscarri-
ages as to
errors.
No
mourning
for them,

not mourned; We have spoken laughingly of those sins; We have not considered this Judgement, as coming from the Lord, as a token of his wrath (*in giving up so many of our Country-men to strong delusions; to believe lyes*) We have shewed little Zeal for Gods glory, that hath been blemished by these detestable things: Neither have we pittied the *many that have followed these pernicious ways.* How little have we mourned for them; though the *Apostle* saith, *their damnation slumbereth not.*

Not using
means to
reduce
the erro-
neous.

How few means have we used for their re-
ducement? hardly put up a Prayer for them?
not admonished them, but let them alone to
perish in their delusions? Not so much as re-
quested an able Minister to have recourse to
these poor deluded Souls in order to the turn-
ing of them from the Idols of their own
brains?

Not pre-
paring
Antidotes
against
the Infe-
ction.

How little have we endeavoured to
strengthen our selves? to prepare Antidotes
against this Infection? We have not studied
the Scriptures, that we might *warn the unruly;*
and resist gain-sayers, and be established in the
present Truths; but, though we have seen so
many ship-wrack their Faith and Consciences,
yet we have been *high-minded*, and have not
feared.

Not dis-
liking
them.

Have we not been guilty of not expressing
our dislike of the wayes of Hereticks as we
should? We have not *shunn'd* them as we
ought. To maintain a Party, to strengthen
a Faction, how have we too much counte-
nanced

nanced them ? their fellowship hath not been enough avoided. How little have we regarded those Apostolical injunctions ? *Now I beseech you, Brethren, mark them, which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the Doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them; for they that are such, serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own bellies; and by good words, and fair speeches, deceive the hearts of the simple. And if any man obey not our word, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. We have shunn'd the house where one with the Plague-sore dwells, but we have not with-drawn from them that cause to erre from the words of Knowledge.* Rom. 16. 17, 18. 2 Thes. 3. 14. Prov. 19. 27.

What shall I say ? We have not so heartily and vigorously contended for the Faith, which was once, and but once, delivered to the Saints, as we ought. The Lord humble us for our luke-warmness. We have cryed up Moderation, and counted him an *Hagiomatrix*, that hath appeared against the abominations of the *Head*. Sure we have not been valiant for the Truth upon the Earth. We have not sparkled so much the more in an holy Zeal, because others have perverted the right wayes of the Lord. Because Fools have not been answered, they have grown wise in their own conceit. We have been afraid to meddle with some, because they have (unreasonably) shrowded themselves under the name of Saints; but Paul with-stood Peter to the face, when Truth was like to suffer. I do not

in

Their ungodliness.

in all this go about to justifie undue rigours: God knows how for base respects, interests, names of our own, we have been too severe against some things of less moment, some circumstances of Church Government, &c. too much zeal about *mint and anise*: we have been too imposing of what lies dark and obscure in the book of God: and this while the *Enemies tares* have been suffered to grow, and the Fundamentals of our Religion have been (at least) endangered. But that which hath been *Englands Sin* is too much *permitting and countenancing of damnable Doctrines*. What shall I say? When God hath said, *Who is on my side? who!* We have hardly answered for our selves. We have been *doubtfull in the Faith*, wavering and reeling, not quite on, nor quite off, but staggering and tottering: Our *Religion* hath been rather *Opinion*, than *Faith*, so that we have stood looking on as *Neuters*, whilst Hereticks have *made Merchandise of Souls with fained words*. The great Truths of God have lyen loose upon our hearts, they have not been *fastned by the Master of the Assemblies*, as *nails in a sure place*: and having little experience of what we profess to know, hence luke warmness followeth on course, or blind zeal for our Ancestours Religion.

O how by reason of the great defection amongst us hath *the way of Truth been evil spoken of?* The common Enemy fastneth all upon Religion. They will not distinguish between *Truth and Error*, yea between *Truth and*

and *Heresie*, and never would put a difference between the *Orthodox* and the *Heterodox*; but if any one that had been called a Christian fell into any damnable Errours or Practises, all Christians suffered thereby; which forced the Primitive Fathers to Penne Remonstrances, Confessions of Faith, and Apologies, that they might clear Christ and his Church from being Mother or Nurse to such a cursed Progeny. And though some amongst us have by *Confessions of Faith*, and otherwise, born witness against Errours, yet doubtless our Consciences will tell us, that we have not by Fastings, Prayers, Studies, and all Endeavours improved all our time and Spirits for the suppressing and drying up the *flood of the Serpent*, the Soul-destroying flood, as we should; but if we have had any Acrimony of Spirit, we have let it forth upon them, that have crost us about *Modes* of Government; rather than against them, who have shaken the Foundations of our Religion. When I consider the multitudes of *Sects* that have been, and are still amongst us, I wonder not that the Gospel hath had a *miscarrying Womb* and *dry Breasts*. In all times Christianity hath suffered hereby. *Zozomen* saith, that many would have followed Christ, but they were discouraged by the divers Doctrines amongst his followers. *Chrysostome* professeth that an *idol* Heathen told him, He would become a *Christi-ligam*, an, but he knew not to what party of them to joyn, there are so many opinions and contentions among Christians. When the multitude of Christians

Act. 2. Christians were one-soul'd, then Fear, and
 32, 33. *Aw,* and Reverence upon all the people; But
 now that one saith I am of Paul, &c. Now
 Religion is had in derision, and Atheisme
 grows exceedingly. O that mine head were
 as waters, &c.

CHAP. X.

Their want of Love to God.

Profes-
 sors want
 of Love
 to God in
 Christ.

3ly. **W**Ant of Love to God is another
 great branch of ungodliness a-
 bounding amongst Professors.

This is so great a branch of un-
 godliness, that Jesus Christ hath reduced all
 the Commandements of the first Table con-
 cerning the Worship of God to this great
Matth. one, *thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all*
 23. 36. *thy Heart, and all thy Soul, and all thy Might.*
 Indeed every one pretends to love God: I
 hardly ever met with a person but said he lo-
 ved God: *He that batesh, dissembleth with*
his lips. God may say truly, *How canst thou*
say, I love thee, when thy heart is not with me &
God is loved, but not for himself, but for
what he brings. God is used, and the World
is embraced. If God comes empty handed,
 or with his hands full of trouble, misery,
 &c.

&c. Farewell. God is loved, but with a secondary love; Professours are lovers of pleasure 2. 4. more than lovers of God. God must stand by, Job. 21. and give place to sensuality, therefore they say unto God depart, &c. They like God whilst they may enjoy their pleasures too, whilst they may not be infringed. Let but a few things be considered, and we will see how much want there is of love to God in Christ.

1. Whom we love we are not ashamed of. The Mothers is such to her Child, and Gods to us, *he is not ashamed to be called our God.* But do not we conceal our Title to God in some Companies that hate him? How do we throw off our Livery, and dare not to be known to have walked with God. Remember *be that is ashamed of me, &c.* Evidenced in being ashamed of a Relation to him. Mar. 8. 38.

2. Parents are troubled when their Children are dishonoured, and so Children when their Fathers; but are our Souls vexed, *racked with the filthy conversations of Sodomites?* Where are the Rivers of waters? Where is thy horror because men keep not Gods Commandments? Not troubled for his dishonour. 2 Pet. 2. 8. Psal. 119. 53. 158.

3. Those we love, their Enemies are ours; Parents Enemies are the Childrens Enemies. But do we hate them, that hate God, *yea with a perfect hatred?* Not hating Gods Enemies. Psal. 139. 21.

4. True lovers of God hate themselves for not loving God enough. How oft do they thus sigh? "Wretch that I am, to grieve God, to estrange my self from God, to come to be with God, to stay with him no longer! How can I content my self with these

Their ungodliness.

“ these transient glances, with these sudden
 “ casts of mine eye, and to be instantly
 “ wheel’d off from my God again? O this
 “ fleeting mind of mine! when will it fix on
 “ God, and abide with him? O this gadding
 “ heart of mine! when will it center in its
 “ true and perfect happiness? When I turn
 “ mine eye from earthly objects, either I
 “ am displeased with them, or there is some
 “ better thing that draws off my mind and
 “ heart: But dare I say so of God? that he
 “ is unlovely? and yet I have been weary
 “ of him.

Not trust-
 ing him.

5. Did we love God, we would trust him,
 we dare trust our very lives in a Friends hands;
 But we dare not so trust God. What would
 a carnal man give that he had but his life and
 health in his own dispose? When he is poor
 he had rather it were in his own hands to sup-
 ply his wants, than in Gods; for he thinks it
 would go better with him. We trust God for
 little. We think our selves quite undone,
 when we have nothing save a God and a Pro-
 mise to trust to.

Not joy-
 ing, nor
 grieving
 as they
 ought.

6. How little do we joy in the presence of
 God and Christ, and grieve for their absence?
 Is God all in the want of all, and is God the
 All in the enjoyment of all? Can we say,
shew us the Father and it sufficeth us. When
 we have no *Fig-tree* left, can we *rejoyce in*
the God of our Salvation? Can we say, *Take*
all Ziba, now that my Lord is come, now that
the Lord stoops to dwell in houses of clay. O
worldlings! take your riches, and make the best
 of

of them, I envy you not, I have enough in God. Do we so grieve for the absence of God and Christ, that nothing but God and Christ can make amends? O that our happiness, life, comforts, were folded up in God and Christ! Can we live no more without God and Christ, than a *Beam* without the *Sun*?

7. True Lovers are thoughtfull to please the Beloved. But is there any thing that we think less of than pleasing of God? A true lover of God is alwayes proving, *what is that* good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God. *Rom. 12. Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.* He is still searching that he may know more wherein he may please God, as willing always to be more useful for God: What have I to do more? but how seldom do we ask our hearts, what way may we *walk in all well pleasing*? How seldom do we *design* for the glory of God?

8. True Lovers are open handed, and bountiful to God: they bestow readily and freely any thing they have on him: they will part with their *Isaaks*, their dearest things, with Limbs, &c. *Rutherford* that *man of God*, wish'd every *limb* a man, every *bone* a man, yea every *hair* a man to set forth the praises of God. When God call's for limbs, can we say Farewell to them? Are there not some things so dear to us that we cannot spare them to Christ? Are we so taken with Christ, that our hearts are dis-engaged from the love of other things? *is every thing vile, but Christ?*

Their ungodliness.

Is all you part from instantly supplied in the loves and smiles of Christ?

9. True Lovers of God are contented with nothing by way of return from God, save only love from him : returns of love they must have. They do not pray save for love, they go not in before God for *Corn, Wine, Oyle, &c.* but for *love*, for God to open his heart, to take off his mask from his lovely face, and shew them the light of his countenance. They are not like the *Raven*, that came to *Noah* : more for necessity, than delight. *Yea in the way of thy Judgements, O Lord, have we waited for thee ; the desire of our Soul is to thy Name, and to the Remembrance of thee : With my Soul have I desired thee : in the Night, yea with my Spirit within me, will I seek thee early.*

Isa. 26.
8, 9.

Not prai- 10. True Lovers are wont to praise each
sing him. other : But how seldom do we set forth the praises of Christ? Love is witty, full of elo-
quence, witness the Spouse, *My Beloved is*
Can. 5. 10, 11, *white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thou-*
12, 13, *sand, his head is as the most fine gold, his*
14, 15, *locks are bushy, black as a Raven, his eyes are*
16. *as the eyes of Doves by the Rivers of waters, washed with milk, and fitly set, his cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers, his lipps like Lillies dropping sweet smelling myrrhe : his hands are like gold Rings set with the Berill, his belly is as bright Ivory overlaid with Saphires, his legs are as Pillars of Marble set upon sockets of fine gold, his countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the Cedars, his mouth is most sweet,*
yea

yea he is altogether lovely. *This is my Be-
loved, &c. I'll praise thee with uprightness: Psal.
I'll praise thee seven times a day. Yea, Da- I 19. 7,
vid thought seven times a day too little, and I 64.
therefore he call'd in all the Creatures of Septies,
Heaven and Earth, Air and Sea, to praise i. e. Sa-
God: the Dragons in the deep must not be pissime.
silent. True Lovers praise God as much as Psal.
they can, they exalt God to the utmost of I 48.
their power; and then, from a sense that God
is above all their praise, they would have eve-
ry thing that hath breath to praise the Lord,
yea and inanimates too for to joyn in the
Quire, Doth Praise wait for God?*

11. Did you love God, you would love e-
very thing of God: Do you love his Omni- Not lo-
presence, his Justice, his Holiness? True ving all
love to Christ sticks not *barely in the Person of and
Christ; but reacheth to all that have an Union Christ.
with him. Do we love Christ mystical, as Jo. 13.
well as personal? Are we of Catholick Spirits? 34, 35.
The Apostle is peremptory, and brandeth I Jo. 4.
them all as Liars, that pretend to love God 19.
and Christ, and do not love Saints.*

12. True Lovers of God thirst after nearer
Communion with God. *My Soul followeth hard Nor
after thee. The Soul still encroacheth upon after
God. Let me see thy Glory, saith Moses, nearer
though he saw more than Mortals were (com- Commu-
monly) permitted to behold; yet Semper nion.
avarus eger, Much would have more. As the Psal. 42.
Hart panteth after the Water-brooks, so pan- I, 2.
teth my Soul after thee, O God: my Soul thirst-
eth for God, for the living God, when shalt I*

come and appear before God? A true Lover of God is under an holy impatience, till he ceaseth to see *darkly in a glass*: He would fain see *with open face*. O! (saith such a Soul) the distance between Christ and me is too great: O! I cannot but *groan earnestly*, when I consider I am *absent from the Lord*, whilst *present in the body*. Lord, (said *Austin*) I will dye, that I may enjoy thee; I will not live, but I will dye: I desire to dye, that I may see Christ; and refuse to live, that I may live with Christ. The broken Rings, Contracts, and Espousals, content not the true Lover; but he longs for the Marriage day. Here are Clouds that oft pass 'twixt God and my Soul, O that I were above them! Here, if I see and enjoy, the fear of losing so sweet a sight, abates the comfort of fruition; but then welcome an eternal day, that shall never have a night.

Being weary of his Commands, 13. If you loved God, his Commandments would not be grievous to you. Love cannot be easily poised: Love hath a kind of Almightyness in it, so that heavy burdens are made light, and almost impossible things become feasible. But of how many things do we say, *What a weariness is it?* How are you haled by Governours, by Conscience, and by the terrours of the Law unto Duties? How like Slaves chain'd to Gallies, you must work, though sore against your wills? Did you love God, you would count nothing tedious, save dulness, in his service. Sin would only be the *Weight*. O the burden of For-

1 Jo. 5. 3
Mal. 1. 13.
Hebr. 12. 1.

Their ungodliness.

- 25

Formality, Pride, &c! But O the pleasures of the wayes of God! *His yoke is easie, his burden light.*

14. Did you love God, you would be jealous, lest it should goe ill with Gods affairs. Not fear- ing how
 The loving Mother trembleth, lest the Child it goes
 should suffer, when she is off from it. But with Gods
 alas! how few *Elies* are there, *whose hearts* affairs.
tremble beause of the Ark? Do you really fear, 1 Sam.
 lest *Formality* should eat out the *Power of* 4. 13.
Godliness, lest *Traditions* should make void
 the *Commandements of God*, lest your *Trades*
 should *spoyl* your *Communion with God*.

You may easily imagine, the want of Love Consider
 to God, must needs be a great Provocation. ations
 O to pretend love, and yet *Judas-like*, *betray* tending to
Christ with a kisse; to say, *Hail Master*, humble
 and yet prefer a base Lust before him? What us, for
 an indignity is it to the Husband, that the want of
 Wife loves the Slave before him? The World Love to
 should be your Slave, but it hath got the God.
 heart, the bosome; and Christ must *stand*
without doors till his locks are wet. O that God Cam³ 5:
 should stoop so low, as to love you, as to
 make you the birth of his everlasting counsels
 of love; that he should carry you long in the
 womb of his eternal purpose! This goodly
 Fabrick of Heaven and Earth had not been e-
 rected, but as a Stage, whereon he would
 shew his love to you. And did he not, in
 the fulness of time, purchase you by the blood
 of his *First-born*, yea of his only begotten
 Son, and for this very end, that he might
 gain your love, as well as reveal his own love?

And yet that your love should not be like an *Eccho*, which returneth what it receiveth? Sure you should cast back Gods beams of love upon himself. This is all he expects, *My Son, give me thine heart*: All the command he layes upon you, is, in one word, *To*
Mat. 22 *Love him.* God might have commanded our
 36, 37. *Children* to be sacrificed, *to pass through the Fire.* O! what a favour is it to love the Lord? That God will honour us so farr, as to suffer us to love him? And yet we love any thing, any sordid base Lust, rather than God. We would count it a favour, if a Prince would give us a privy Key, to come to him when we please: Here is more honour, we may have recourse to the *bosom* of God when we will. God would have us to love him *with all the heart, with all the soul.* *The Lord would not lose one grain of our love.* O that we should deny him that which he (with reverence be it spoken, and thought on) is so fond of. *And now Israel, what doth the Lord*
Deut. *require of thee, but to love him, and to serve*
 10. 12. *the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy Soul.* God requires not now Cattle upon a thousand Hills, or Rivers of Oyle, *Only, Love me, Love me, Love me heartily, constantly, chiefly*; and yet we deny him our loves. O! I hate my self whilst writing this, that I love the Lord so little, so seldom: It was he *that made me, and not I my self*: He hath wonderfully formed me, and wonderfully preserved me, and shewed many wonders in the deeps to me. O! what shall I do to love the
 the

the Lord with a superlative love? O I am ready to say, *Let me love nothing, if I love not thee; nay, love nothing, till I love thee!* O that you would grieve abundantly for want of Love to God! You have past as through the Red Sea, you have been as the flaming Bush, God hath looked after you, as if he minded none but you, you have been as the Signet on his right hand, nay more, you have been engraven on his Palmes, and what, not love the Lord? Shame upon you, that you can dote upon the dark, filthy, dirty World, and neglect the Lord of Glory. All the Affections you have, God gave them, (when he gave thee a reasonable Soul) but for this end, that you should place them on himself, and not on his Enemy. *Is it not hard measure that God should be denied Love, when he gave you power to love?* If a Friend sends you Bottles of Wine, it is hard, that when he comes to you, you should deny him a taste of his bounty. Believe it Sirs, whatever you do for the Lord, unless you Love him, yea, unless you Love him more than any thing else, it is not accepted. *Though you give your Body to be burned, and have not Charity, it profiteth you nothing.* *Though you bring forth Fruit, yet you are empty Vines, because you eye Self, not God.* Your most exquisite Services are but pieces of dead Carrion, unless they be seasoned with the Salt of Love. This People draw nigh with their lips, but I abhor them, and their Duties, because the silly Dove is without an heart. Whatever a

I Cor.

13.3.

Hof. 10.

I.

Their ungodliness.

man gives me, if his heart be not in it, I flight it: God much more. What shall I say? The Holy Apostle counts him worthy of a Curse, that loves not Jesus Christ. *If any man love not the Lord Jesus, let him be Anathema Ma-*
1 Cor. 16. 22. *ranatha.* And is it not sad to be cursed to *the coming of Christ?* He deserves it, that loves not Christ, and he must and shall be forced to own the Righteousness of God in sentencing him to Eternal flames, who might have been secured against them, had he but loved Christ more than a base dunghill Lust.

CHAP. XI.

Their evil surmises of God.

Their evil surmises of God. 4ly. **E**vil surmises of God is another piece of ungodliness found too frequently among some of the more raised Professours, even such as have the root of the matter in them. I shall the rather insist on this sin, because right thoughts of God are the fuell which maintains the fire of Religion: without which it soon decayeth and is extinguished.

Miscal-
ling his
love-to-
kens.

1. *Do not we miscal Gods love-tokens? Hath not God sent thee many love-tokens by his Spirit to assure thee that he owns thee and de-*

delights in thee, as his Spouse? For thee to question thy relation to him upon every turn must needs be grievous to him, how grievous then is it for thee to deny all his tokens of grace and love to thy Soul, and to count them but delusions, but the works of the Infernal Spirit, transforming himself into an Angel of Light? To call light, darkness, good, evil, sweet, bitter, the work of Christ, the Devils work, is ill resented by the Lord, it goeth unto his heart. You that are Husbands, Wives, Parents, Children, cannot endure to have your love and fidelity suspected upon every base suggestion and whisper. Believe it God takes notice, and laies to heart all your jealousies of him, all your base unworthy censures of him.

2. *How ill are Gods Providences resented?* Ill re-
Although God hath told you there is a beauty senting
in their contexture, that *things present and Gods Pro-*
things to come are yours, that all shall work to- vidences.
gether for good, that your Providential losses, 1 Cor. 3.
as well as your Providential enjoyments, that *22.*
your changes, as well as your settlements, your *Rom. 8.*
wants as well as your abundance shall all be *28.*
Sanctified to you: yet how few, with that
blessed man, *blest the Lord, when taking a Job. 1.*
way? And with Paul, *rejoyce, yea glory in 21.*
tribulations? God assures you, that your sick- *Rom. 5.*
nesses, reproaches, wants, shall do you good, *2, 3.*
yea death shall do you good, all shall be good,
or do you good, all shall be food, or physick,
out of the eater shall come forth sweetness, even
from Gods desertions you shall have advanta-
ges,

ges, your very thorns shall drop honey, shall bear grapes, yet notwithstanding what hard thoughts have you of God under such dispensations? Didst thou onely accuse thy self, judge thy self, abhorre thy self, it were well; but in speaking against thy self, thou fallest foul upon God himself by questioning his love from these providences. Deny thy self what thou wilt, but beware of a denial of Gods love, and of the Spirit of grace, that hath taken up his lodgings within thee; O that all melancholly doubting Christians would consider of this (too seldome suspected) provocation and unkindness of theirs towards God! Q! take up, and keep up better thoughts of God, what ever his carriage be towards you. *Though he slay you, yet trust in him.* When will you be as David, who though beleaguered with Enemies, yet kept up good thoughts of God, he doubted not of Gods pittie, of Gods favour, and protection, and therefore

Psa. 3. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people,
6. that have set themselves against me round about.

Psa. 27. Though an host should encamp against me,
3. v. 1. my heart shall not fear, &c. in this will I be confident.

In what? Why that the Lord is my Light, and my Salvation, and the strength of my life. God hath not spent all his stores, he hath enough for me, he will not suffer me to be tempted above what I shall be able to bear, but will with the temptation make way for my escape. And hath not God told thee, that

Isa. 54. the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed,
10. yet his loving kindnesse shall not depart from

from thee, neither shall the Covenant of his peace be removed? But alas! Thou canst entertain good thoughts of God in fair weather, but let them fall in a storm: then it is, *Ma- Mar. 4.*
ster, carest thou not that we perish. Thou canst 38.
 truit in God when he carrieth himself as a Friend, and answereth all thy requests, and granteth all thy desires, but not so, when he seemeth an Enemy. Canst thou with *Paul*
say, I am perswaded, that neither Death, nor Rom. 8.
Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Pow- 38, 39.
ers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor
height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall
be able to seperate us from the love of God,
which is in Christ Jesus our Lord? Whilst the
 Candle of the Lord shines on thy Tabernacle,
 whilst thy bones are full of marrow, whilst thou
 wasthest thy feet in butter, whilst every *Mor-*
dechai boweth in the gates, whilst thou hast
 dews on thy heart, meltings and enlargements
 in Ordinances; so long thou canst keep up
 good thoughts of God and his love; but let
 the Scene be altered, let the Sun wrap up it
 self in a Cloud of darkness, let the rod lie on
 the back, and the Arrows of the Almighty
 pierce the heart, and then not only grace with-
 in is questioned, but the love of God without.
I am cast out from before thine eyes, his mercy
is clean gone. Then all men are lyars, even
Samuel himself. But alas! how ignorant art
 thou of the methods of God? Doth not he
 chasten every son that he receiveth? Should not *Heb. 12.*
 he have liberty to use what rod he pleaseth, *6, 7, 8.*
 whilst all are for thy Profit, that thou mayst
 par-

Rom. 8. *partake of his Holinesse?* Might not *Christ* have had ill surmises of his *Father* upon higher grounds, than any thou canst name? Who art thou to hope for milder usage from God, than he shew'd to his own Natural Son? If thou art *predestinated to be conformable to Christ*, to be partaker of his sufferings, to drink of his cup, wilt thou doubt thy filiation from thy filling up the sufferings of *Christ*?

29.
Phil. 3.
 20.
Matth.
 20. 23.
Col. 1.
 24.

Conclu-
 ding
 thence
 sadly of
 Gods in-
 tentions.

3. *How do some draw sad conclusions from Gods Providentiall dispensations concerning his intentions for the future?* When they lose dear Relations, an Husband, or the Wife of the bosome gone, a sweet Child snatcht away, and perhaps by inadvertency; O then no sooner can we enter into the house of mourning, but we hear cries from you, O my hypocrisy! O my formality! O this is one of Gods Arrows of Vengeance! O! God is beginning his Controversie, which will never end, till it laies me as low as Hell! Whereas you should entertain other thoughts of God, viz.
 "That now he is removing the *Idols of jealousy*; now he is weaning your hearts from
 "Creatures, that he may have all your love;
 "he knew how much Spiritual Communion
 "you have lost by the company of your Rela-
 "tions, and now he himself would have
 "more of your company; now he would
 "have you to delight your selves more in
 "himself; now he hath but dryed the stream
 "(a weak, unsatisfying stream) that you may
 "drink and drink abundantly of the purest
 "Chrystal waters, that drop from the blessed
 "Foun-

“Fountain immediately ; now God hath a
 “blessed design of *grace* to prepare you for
 “*glory* ; he is now making the *earth* an *howl-*
 “*ing Wilderuess* ; that you may long for *Ca-*
 “*naan* ; he is now leaving you to naked walls,
 “that he himself may fill them ; he is now
 “turning all out of doors , that you may have
 “the more liberty to treat with his Majesty
 “with the less disturbance , without inter-
 “ruption. Alas ! you know not how unkind
 “and burdensome , yea treacherous your
 “Friend, your Relation might have been , if
 “continued longer to you ; you know not
 “what a dishonour to God and to your selves,
 “he might have been , if longer continued
 “in the land of the living , and therefore to
 “preserve him from scandal, and your selves
 “from heart-breakings thereby , God hath in
 “mercy, pity, and faithfulness, removed
 “him, taking him away (it may be) from
 “the evil to come. Few put these Com-
 ments upon Gods Providences towards them ;
 but commonly take all in the worst sense they
 can.

4. *How do some instantly call in question* Calling
Gods love , if Evidences be not seen , if they be Gods love
not fairly writ , so as the Soul can read them ? in questi-
 But may not the *money* be in the *Sacks mouth*, on for
 though the *Brethren* see it not for a while ? want of
 Yea though the Soul hath had a welcome Eviden-
 ces,
 from God , yea many a welcome , yet how
 soon is the Soul so crest-fall'n , that it is afraid
 to go into Gods presence ? and through the
 power of *Satan* and *Melancholy* , duty , yea
 many

many duties have hereby been intermitted? This provokes God exceedingly: What? **When** you have had his *Staffe*, and his *Bracelets*, when you have had such admirable proofs of his Love, in sending his *Son*, and *Holy Spirit* after you, to work *so great* and *glorious* a change in you, coming in the *still voice*, and *whispering* Love unto you; *dandling* you as on the *knee*, welcoming you again and again to the Throne of Grace, oft filling your empty Bottles, answering your thousand Doubts, sealing the Covenant of Grace, and *granting* and *confirming* to you all the *Patents* of Love: And yet at every turn have you doubted, whether God loves you or no? God

Isai. 49. chides Zion for this, *Let not Zion say, the Lord hath forsaken, &c.*

Concluding God no Friend because Satan is an Enemy and doth tempt them.

5. *Are there not some good Souls* (though their goodness lies not in this) *that are apt to question the Love of God to them, from the blasphemous thoughts and injections that they are harrazed with?* But what, because *Satan* is your *Adversary*, must God therefore not be your *Friend*? Because *Satan* doth tempt you, will it therefore follow, that God doth not love you? Were we not wonderfully prone to evil surmises and distrusts of God, we would not make Satans Malice a ground sufficient to doubt of the Love of God. Doth the Husband love his Wife the less, for that she is tempted, whilst she defies the Tempter, and is burthened with his foul and daring solicitations?

O how is Satan gratified hereby? He is the great Accuser, the great Tale-bearer, that separateth choice Friends: He goeth betwixt God and Saints, as a Mediatour of Differences, to accuse Saints to God, and God to Saints, and will you any longer be Tale-bearers against God? Believe it, the false witness which he brings, is against him, who hath given you wonderful proofs of his everlasting Love towards you. When, O! when will you complain of Satan, in the words of the Psalmist? *The Enemy hath persecuted my Soul, he hath made me to dwell in darkness, like those that have been long dead.* It is the Enemy that vails and obscures the work of the Spirit what he can, that you shall see it no more than a dead man can behold any company that is in the Room, Vault or Grave with him. When Satan tells you, your Graces are counterfeit, your Faith but that which a temporary may have, your Graces but moral Vertues; O! how soon is your Enemy credited? how much more believed than God, his Ministers, and all the testimonies of Gods Love that are brought you? Hence you are one day jealous of the Kindness of Christ, another day of the Fulness of Christ, then of the Intentions of Christ, he means no good to me: Hence also you doubt of the acceptance of your Persons, and Duties: *There is a Cloud hangs over my Prayers, that they cannot pass up;* If I come to Christ, he will not look on such a Wretch as I am. Many such hard thoughts of Christ are suggested by Satan, and too soon entertained

Considerations against evil surmises of God.

Psal. 143.3.

Their ungodliness:

tained by us : *Whilst so , you can never thank God for any Mercy ; for you doubt whether it be a Mercy to you.* “ Can you bless him for
 “ life , health , and length of dayes , whilst
 “ you have this *Suggestion* , that your account
 “ swells with your time ? Can you bless God
 “ for Estates , Honours , Friends , &c. when
 “ you have this *jealousie* , that God is fattning
 “ you as Hogs for the slaughter ? Can you
 “ bless God for Ordinances , whilst you *sus-*
 “ *pect* , that there is a Commission given
 “ forth , that *though you have eyes* , yet *you*
 “ *shall not see* , &c. And that the *Sun* is to *har-*
 “ *den you* , whilst it *softneth others* ? Yea ,
 “ how can ye bless God for Christ , when you
 “ *imagine he is set for your fall* ?

By giving way to these Jealousies , you
 dam up the Springs of Praise , that should
 flow from your lips day and night. *Hereby*
you will also be hindered from waiting on the
Lord , with that free and chearful Spirit as ye
ought. I cannot wait on an Enemy , as on a
 Friend. If I have cursed jealousies of any
 man , I find no pleasure to be in his company ;
 and if he employs me about any thing , I goe
 grudgingly about it. The truth is , “ So
 “ long as you entertain suspicions of Gods
 “ willingness to make you happy , and to af-
 “ ford you sufficient means to make you hap-
 “ py , all your Religion will degenerate into
 “ a spurious and base-born Devotion. In-
 “ stead of that free and friendly converse that
 “ ought to be maintained between God and
 “ your Souls , you will only flatter him in a
 “ ser-

Patrick's
Parable
of the
Pilgrim.
P. 27,
28.

“servile manner, and bribe him not to be
“your Enemy. Worship God you must.
“for fear of incurring his displeasure, and
“lest your neglects of him should rouse up
“his anger against you; but you cannot en-
“ertain any chearful and friendly society
“with a Being which appears in a dress so
“horrible to your Souls. Now between
“this necessity of coming to him, and that
“fearfulness to approach him, what can
“there be begotten, but a forced and con-
“strained Devotion, which, because you do
“not love, you would willingly leave, did
“not the dread and horror you have in your
“Souls of him, dragg you to his Altars?
“And what are you wont to do there? Truly
“nothing but cry, and look as if you were
“going to Execution, till you can flatter your
“selves into some hopes, that he is moved
“by your cries, and forced submissions, to
“lay aside his frowns, and cast a better aspect
“upon you: But your hard thoughts of God
“returning, you are constrained to renew
“your slavish Devotions, that you may pur-
“chase another gracious look from him. In
“this circle do your poor Souls spend many
“dayes, and advance not one step towards
“the *New Jerusalem*. No wonder therefore
if God be so provoked at this sin of evil sur-
mises. This is what I have observed very
common among the Lords People, they will
pray with some earnestness, and perhaps
have some confidences that God is gracious,
and will answer their prayers, and grant all
their

Their ungodliness.

their desires ; but no sooner off from their knees , but (if they think of God , yet) they lay down their expectations of receiving any thing from God , and fall to distrusting and to renew their jealousies of God as soon as they have done Praying. What ? Is God *yea and nay* ? Is he kind , when thou art on thy knees , and unkind as soon as off ? Will God take it well from thee , that in thy duties thou shalt put to thy *Seal that God is true* , and loving , and minds thy good ? And presently take off the Seal , yea rather Seal to a parchment of the Devils drawing ; that God is false , churlish , and one that seeks thy ruine ? O ! whilst there is a Devil , and a melancholy-humour to be wrought upon , I do even despair to see this cursed God-dishonouring and debasing sin , to be quite rooted out of the hearts of Christians ; but yet it is a Provocation , and *Let it be for a Lamentation.*

CHAP. XII.

Their unthankfulness.

Professours unthankfulness,

5ly. **U**Nthankfulness is another piece of ungodliness that Professours are very guilty of. Praise , or Thankfulness is as the Penny or Pepper-corn , which God expects

peaks as acknowledgement, as *high Rent*, to be paid him for all we hold of him. But how hath this been denyed? And thereby how justly have we forfeited all into the hands of God? Though the paying of this *rent penny* *Psalm. 65.* be the only *Heavenly* work that can be done *ult.* on *Earth*; the only *joyfull* imployment, that shall last to all *Eternity* in another life; a work *Isa. 46.* that should ever wait for God in *Zion*, and therefore *Zion* is called *Israel my glory*; not only because God glorieth in *Zion*, but because *Zion* should continually glorifie God: yet how unthankfull are the most Professours? The very Heathens will rise up in judgement against unthankfull Christians; They had their hymns to their Gods. *Plato* when ready to die, gave God thanks for three things, that he was made a man, that he was born in Greece, and that he lived in the time of *Socrates*. How much more should our lips shew forth the high praises of God, who hath made us not only men, but new men? That we are born of God, adopted the Children of the most high, and regenerated by the Spirit? That we have breathed not in Greece, but in *England*, in *Ariel*, a place of Visions, in the *Valley of Vision*? O the riches of free grace! that our Mothers Conceived with us in this place of light, and at such a time when the Nation was most enriched with the light of the Gospel, when it was full of gracious Ministers, the best that ever the world saw since the Apostles dayes! Why had not God brought thee out of the Womb when this

Their ungodliness.

land was overrun with *Paganism*? with *Po-
pery*? Why had not the Lord shut thee up
and imprisoned thee with the rest of the
World in *darkness*, and in the *shadows* of
death. O that when the Gospel shines but
upon a little spot of ground, which God hath
inclosed for himself, and stiles it his *pleasant
place*, his *garden*, that thou shouldst be the
man *born there*! That when the rest of the
world is like the *barren* mountains, on which
no rain falls, and brings forth nothing but
bryars, that God should bring thee forth in
the place of his *Tabernacle*! And yet thou in-
gratefull wretch will hardly confess, that *the
lines are fall'n happily*, and that *thou hast a
goodly heritage*. How feldome is such lan-
guage as this heard from thee? "Blessed be
"the Lord that my *lot is fall'n in so fair a
"ground*; blessed be God that I was born in
"England, and not in the *Wasts of Arabia*,
"or *America*; thanks be to the Lord, that I
"have had more than the light of the Sun,
"Moon, and Stars to conduct me to *Jesus*,
"that so many *wells of Salvation* have been
"opened unto me, which have been shut unto
"the *most* of the World. But to return to
Plato: If he thanked God for living in the
dayes of *Socrates*, we may say that greater
than *Socrates* have been amongst us. We have
had those, *with whom we have taken sweet
counsell*, *with whom together we have gone to
the house of God*, who have been *burning*, as
well as *shining lights*; many examples of close-
walking heavenly Christians have we enjoyed,
such

such as have had *the wisdom from above*, and more pure learning, than ever *Socrates* or *Plato* could pretend to. The Society of how many heavenly, grave, serious, active, fruitfull Christians have we been blest with, such as have been faithfull admonishers, such as would not *suffer sin to rest upon us*, such as have dayly told us *here is the way, walk herein?* O the helps we have had! But O the cursed unthankfulness of our hearts towards God, notwithstanding his bestowing upon us so many lights to guide us, so many fires to warm us, and so much salt to season us!

1. *Instead of giving God the glory of all, O!* Evidently how have we sacrificed to our own nets and to other Instruments? We have praised our selves, rather than God for what we have. We have not ascribed the glory to God, but to Instruments: like that *Cardinal*, who writ down how much such a *Prince* honoured him, what such a *Lord* did for him, and what such a *Pope* conferr'd on him: whereupon another infers, *This man remembred his Friends*, but forgot God. *Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands*; but God hath little or no share in the Triumph.

ced in
their Sa-
crificing
to Instru-
ments,
Hab. 1.
16.

2. *How sensible are we of our wants and straits?* But O how unaffected with the goodness of God towards us? *How full of complaints are we?* but empty of acknowledgements? Hath not the want of some one thing robb'd us of the comfort of all our enjoyments, and God of the praise that was due to his name? We have been (such is our way-

Too much
Com-
plaining.

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ward Nature) more troubled for the want of some one thing, than thankful for many mercies : Like *Haman*, one *Mordecai* not bowing to our desires, hath made us heavy and senseless under all our honours, and Gods vouchsafements : Like *Achab*, we have been more dejected for want of *Naboth's Vineyard*, than we have bless'd God for a Kingdom.

Being
most in
the Peti-
tionary
part of
Prayer.

3. *Are not we oftner, longest and heartiest in the Petitionary part of Prayer ?* We are still craving the supply of wants ; but seldom, very seldom, too too seldom blessing of God for what we are stored with : Our *Petitions* are long, but *Praises* are short ; To whom be praise, honour and glory, serves for a sufficient *Doxalgy* : Yea, how earnest, how fervent, how importunate are we in the *Petitionary* part ; but how dull and heartless are we in the *Gratulatory* part of Prayer ?

Setting
up their
rest in
Gladness.

Psal.
107. 30.
31.

4. *Do not we set up our rest in being glad of Mercies and Deliverances ?* Whereas it is one thing to be glad of a Mercy or Deliverance, but another thing to be thankful for it. *Then are they glad* : I but that will not serve the turn ; it is a return of an higher nature, which God looks for : *O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness !*

Forgetting
Mercies.
Isa. 17.
10.

5. *Are not we unmindful of the gracious dealings of God with us ?* Have not we forgotten the God of our Salvations, and been unmindful of the Rock of our Strength ? "He is an unthankful man (saith *Seneca*) that denies a Benefit received, so is he that dis-
"seemles

“seemles it, together with him that requites
“it not: but of all the rest, he is *most* un-
“thankful, that hath forgotten it.

6. *Have not we neglected to make Catalogues* Not making Ca-
talogues of Mer-
cies.
of the Mercies we have received, to help our
memories? How can we, that have not, and
will not submit to this Divine Ordinance, look
upon our selves as some of Gods Israel! This Psal.
God hath ordained for a Law, and a Statute 78. 5.
for Israel: What was this Ordinance? That Deut. 4.
they should write it (what God had done for
them) and so provide, that the Generations 6. 7.
to come might know what God had done. 31. 19.
But alas! how little care have we, that *what-*
soever God does, may be for ever to his glory? *Eccles.*
How unjust are we unto our Children, and 3. 14.
the *Generations to come*, in depriving them of
a faithful Record of Gods Mercies to us, in
which God speaks to them, as well as unto
us? What God spake to *Jacob* at *Bethel*, he
spake to *Israel*, that lived in *Hosea's* time, a-
bove a thousand years after it: *There he spoke* Hos. 12.
with us. How injurious to them? By such a 3.
faithful Record, they might read the right way
in sayling Heaven-ward; by our Falls, they
might know where lye the Rocks and Quick-
sands; and by our Deliverances, where Out-
gates are to be found.

7. *Have not we been too silent concerning the* Not speaking
Goodness of God towards us? How seldom do of Gods
we with David say, Come and hear all ye that Mercies
fear God, and I will declare what he hath done unto
for my Soul. How unlike Saints are we? others,
Thy Saints shall bless thee, they shall speak of Psal. 66.
16.

Their ungodliness.

Psal. the glory of thy Kingdom, and talk of thy power, to make known to the sons of men thy mighty
145.10, acts. I will mention the loving Kindnesses of the
11, 12. Lord, and the Praises of the Lord, according
Isa.63.7 to all that he hath bestowed on me, &c. so
 sings Zion.

8. Have not we neglected to call on others to
 Not stirring up joyn with us in the blessing of God? When did
 ring up we make a Collection of Praises from our
 others to Friends, that would gladly have been in the
 joyn with them in Quire? A thankful heart is fill'd with enlarged
 praising desires, that others, that all, would joyn
 God. in the work of Praising God. A gracious
 heart doth not think it enough to praise God alone;
 though it would be praising God, were there none in
 Heaven or Earth to bear it company.

But I shall speak more particularly, and instance
 Their Unthankfulness. in some of those choice personal Mercies
 (to wave national ones) for which the best of us are too too
 unthankful.

For Conversion. How have we forgot the hole, and deep pit,
 and miry clay, out of which we were digg'd?
 Have not we been unmindful of the blessed Jubilee,
 when the Prisoners were let out of the Prison-house?
Acts Paul remembreth many Circumstances of his Conversion,
 22. 6, 7. the Place wherein, in a journey nigh to Damascus;
 the Time when, about Noon; the Manner how,
 suddenly there did shine from Heaven a great
 Light round about me, and I fell to the ground,
 and heard a voice, &c. He remembered also
 what he was before Conversion: I was a Persecutor,
1 Tim. a Blasphemer, and injurious. What
 2. 13. faith

faith God? *Remember this day:* What day? The day wherein you were delivered from the house of bondage under Sin, the World, and Satan, O! how have we forgotten, that the Lord, by a strong and irresistible work of his blessed Spirit: translated us out of the Kingdom of Satan, into the Kingdom of his dear Son? It was he that made Jordan to give back, and delivered us from Egypt, and the Wilderness, that we might inherit the good Land. O! what Enemies were we, studying to be damned, galloping to Hell, till God met us?

How seldom do we look back to the Spring For Ele-
from whence all our Mercy flows? How un- tion.
 thankful have we been for that Original-foun-
 tain-Mercy, eternal Election? Why should
 God single us out a People for himself? Why
 did Grace blossom from Eternity? Why did
 God plot and study my happiness before I had
 a being? What was there, that Jacob is
 smiled upon, and Esau not so? God might
 have had his Revenues of Glory out of my
 ruine. O that he should glorifie the riches of
 his mercy in my Salvation! And yet how little
 is God magnified for this?

How little do we bless God for Christ? For
 Though he be the Stream that alone refresheth Christ,
 the City of God, yet how seldom is his Love,
 his Stoops and condescensions for us, his bleed-
 ing and dying for us, remembered by us, with
 hearty Praises and Thanksgivings?

How little do we bless God for the Covenant For the
of Grace, which Mr. Allen excellently calls of Grace,
 and the
 The Spirit,

Their ungodliness.

The Bow in the Cloud, after a Deluge of Sin and Misery, the forfeited Lease of Eternity renewed, the Magna Charta of the City of God, the Hopes of Sinners, and the Riches of Saints? And in particular, for the Promise of the Spirit, in all his Offices and Operations, for the application of the purchased Possession? I

Ezek.

36. 27.

For outward Salvations.

will put my Spirit within you.

How little do we remember to bless the Lord for outward Salvations? You begin perhaps with a little, as Jacob, and now behold you have two bands, a troop of Children, Friends, &c. and an Estate to maintain them. When others have had one Mess, you have had Benjamin's Portion, the silver cup put into the sack's mouth; Riches, and God too; Estate, and Christ too; Peace, and the God of Peace too; the World, and a good Title to it: and yet do not you seldome cry out, Bless the Lord, O my Soul! and let all that is within thee praise his holy Name? How seldome do you consider who hath maintained you all this while? Who hath delivered you, and pull'd you as brands out of the fire? You have had the Sentence of Death in your selves; you have been, with David and Paul, in the mouth of the Lion, and yet saved; near to perish by the Bullet, Sword, Pestilence, Feaver, and other dangers, and yet your Lives given you for a prey: But how soon have you forgotten the wonders shewen unto the dead? O the many preventing Mercies that you have been made partakers of! Hath not God secured you in many travails? How many have died much younger than

than you, whilst the Lord lengtheneth out your dayes in order to Repentance? How many have died in an instant, and been snatch'd away, without any warning given of Death's approach; whilst you have had many an Harbinger, to give you to understand its nearness to you? How many have been crush'd by falls from houses, and devoured by beasts, and by other accidents have been hastened to their long home; whilst God is long suffering to you? How many have you seen drawn on Sleds, led to shameful and violent Deaths; whilst you have been kept from such dismal ends? And are there no thanks due to the Name of God? And yet *how seldom do you admire at distinguishing Providence, and preventing loving kindneses?* You have a guard of Angels to attend you day and night, to secure you from danger; but *how little do you bless the Lord for the Heavenly Host?* And yet, if you do thank God for some signal outward Mercies, perhaps for ease from the Stone, Gout, Cholick; perhaps for security from the rage of the devouring Pestilence: if you thank not God *more* for deliverance from *Hell*; from the *guilt* and *power* of Sin, than for outward Salvations, you discredit God, and his choicest Mercies, by under-rating Spirituals to Temporals.

We should have blessed God for his *Rod*, For *sufferings* as well as for his *Staffe*, for both are *Mercies*; *for* *Christ* but *how unthankful are we even for sufferings* for *righteousness sake?* God expects, that in every thing we give thanks; as we should not
le

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be partial in our *Obedience*, to neither in our *Thanksgiving*. How little have we imitated the ancient Christians, whose mouths were alwayes full of *Thanks be unto God*? They saluted one another with *Deo gratias*; and when they heard tydings of *Persecution* or *Protection*, of *Crosses* or *Comforts*, still they cried out, *God be thanked*. How unlike are we to famous *Bradford*? If (said he) the *Queen* will release me, I will thank her; if she will keep me in Prison, I will thank her; if she will burn me, I will thank her. Thou shouldst say from thy very heart, "Though sick, though scorned, though threatned, though all the day long counted as a sheep for the slaughter; yet blessed be God that I am counted worthy to suffer for his Name: Blessed be God, that he counts me for a Son, and chasteneth me for my profit, that I may be made partaker of his holiness: Blessed be God, that I am chastened, that I may not be condemned."

Eph. 5. But how few give thanks alwayes in all things unto God? We have been too backward to

Isa. 24. glorifie God in Zion, much more in the Fires.
15. The Apostle Peter would not have any man,

1 Pet. 4. suffering as a Christian, to be ashamed; but to
16. 13. glorifie God on this behalf, and to rejoyce, in as much as he is partaker of Christs sufferings.

But God knows how farr from Praises we have been, when the Storms have been high, and threatned our Tabernacles.

Considerations against Vnthankfulness. How hath God charged us to remember Mercy, and to praise him for it? Ye that fear the Lord, praise him: Praise him, O ye Servants of

of the Lord! Praise thy God, O Zion! Praise him in the heights: Praise God in his Sanctuary: Praise him for his mighty acts: Praise him according to his excellent greatness. Doth not the innumerableness of Gods requiries of Praise and Thanksgiving, aggravate our neglect of this Duty? *What Provision hath Christ made against this Sin?* Hath not he appointed the Sacrament of his Supper, on purpose to help us to Remember him, and his saving benefits? *Do this in Remembrance of me.* But have not many Professours been so resolved to be unthankful, that they have neglected this great Ordinance, which was appointed to strengthen their Remembrance of past Mercies? *Hath not God told us, that he hath formed us for his praise?* And what, yet backward thereunto? *We can never love God to an height, whilst we forget his loving Kindnesses.* I wonder not, that many complain of their decays of Love to God, whilst they forget his wonders of Grace and Love to their Souls. *Even Publicans will love those of whom they are beloved.* And did we oftner recount the Mercies of God, they would work endearments betwixt God and our Souls: Did we consider, what a wonder it is, that God should draw us out of nothing; that he, who stoops to behold the things of Heaven, should put his finger to our workmanship; that he should curiously work us, as Needle-work, in the dark Vaults of Nature; and that when we were fuller of sin, than the Toad of poison, that yet he should feed a Toad, and cloath

Psal. 22.

23.

135. 1.

147. 12.

148. 1.

150.

1, 2.

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cloath'd a Cockatrice : the Fire of Love to God would burn within our breasts. *How is God provoked by this sin ?* God took it ill at the hands of the Israelites , that they remembered *Psal. 78.* not his hand , nor the day in which he delivered 42. them : How much more do we grieve the Lord , who remember not the goodness and salvations of the Lord in Canaan , yea in Zion ? Our Saviour was grieved , that his Disciples remembered not the five Loaves , and the *Mat. 16.* seven Loaves , and how many Baskets they took 8, 9, 10. up : Innumerable greater favours hath God shewed to us , and yet we forget them. How have we forgot the God that bridled Natures proud waves , and said , *Hitherto ye shall goe , and no farther ?* When we were ripe for Judgement , then Mercy stept in , and yet how slow to give thanks ? Hardly one of ten blesteth God for cleansing Mercy , as they ought. *Were there not ten cleansed , but where are the nine ?* This makes me fear , People have not had a deep sense of the misery and stains of Nature , for that their Saviour is no more thanked. “ Did not the Lord force thee , by an over-powering work of Grace “ upon thy Soul at first Conversion , to be “ willing to be made happy ? Did not he com- “ pel thee to come into the Feast ? Was it not “ God that brought thee to such a Parish , to “ such a Minister , and to such a Text ? And “ did not he , by his Almighty power , en- “ able thee to believe and apply ? Was it not “ he , that broke thine heart , when as hard “ as a nethermost Mill-stone , and made it soft , “ mal-

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[II]

" malleable and pliant to his will and plea-
 " sure ? And what , forget the wonders of
 " the Lord in the deep ? This vexeth the Lord
 " to the heart. Did not he cause the Walls
 " of Jerico to fall , as by the voice of Rams-
 " horns , by weak inconsiderable means ?
 " Did not he alienate thine heart from Lusts ,
 " that were dearer to thee than thine eyes ?
 " Did not he present the face of Christ , as
 " lovely to thy Soul , who before was despised
 " and rejected ? And hath not Christ fed thee
 " with fresh supplies of free Grace , that have
 " watered thy Soul every moment , so that you
 " have been kept through his mighty power ?
 " How many doubts hath Christ answered ;
 " and how many scruples hath he , by his
 " Holy Spirit , satisfied thee in ? And yet ,
 " O wretched heart ! how unthankfull hast
 " thou been ? *Thou hast forgot all his benefits.*
 A man would think it were impossible , that
 every displeasing Providence should make us
 so forgetful of all the mighty Works , that
 have been done within doors upon our Souls.
How just is it with God to plague us ; for this
our unkindness unto him ? Because thou hast for- Isa. 17.
gotten , &c. therefore the harvest shall be an 10, 11.
heap. In the beginning all succeeded well ,
 (saith *Vatablus* upon the place) according to
 our desire : *In the day the Plant grew , and in*
the morning the Seed flourished ; but because of
 unthankfulness , extreme misery followed.
 Wonder not , that the Showres are withheld ,
 that the Lord causeth the Sun to set on the
 Prophets at Noon day , that the Manna falls
not

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Ingrato
quod do-
natur, de-
perditur.
Sen.

not before your doors, that the *hidden Man-
nah*, and *white Stone*, are denied you, you
have been unthankfull, you have *not taken
care for the fragments, that nothing be lost.*
Gods Mercies have been lost upon you. O r
Waters were become *Wines*, our *Gleanings*
were better than the *Worlds Vintage*: God
dealt with us as *Sons*. But now, if he draws
in his hand, and *make his Garden as a desolate
Wilderness* for this sin, who can say unto
God, *What dost thou?* Must not all of us put
our mouths in the dust? Did not we sit un-
der our own *Vines*? Had we not our *solemn
Assemblies*? Did not we *goe in troops to the
house of the Lord*? Was not *Holiness* in cre-
dit? Did not the mix'd multitude joyn with
us, and desired to be *numbred amongst us,*
because God was with us? Did not *fear come
upon all the People?* And had not the *Churches
rest?* Did we fear the shaking of the *Spear*?
Might we not have been as holy as we pleased?
Had not we as much liberty as we desired?
But O then how unthankfull were we? How
troubled were we, that every *Mordecai* did
not bow; that every one would not be of our
mind, and *dance after our Pipe*? God knows
what a Controversie there is with the Land,
for the Unthankfulness of them that dwell
therein. O how glad would ye be of *one of
the dayes of the Son of man*; of your old Pri-
vileges, and Spiritual Liberties? *Because ye
have not served God with joy and praise in
dayes of plenty, therefore it is but a righteous
thing, that you serve in scarcity and famine of
Bread: of the Word of the Lord.* CHAP.



CHAP. XIII.

Their neglect of Prayer, especially of secret Prayer.

6ly. **N**eglect of Prayer is another part Professors of Ungodliness, too common even neglect among Professours. Request and of Prayer; Thanksgiving are (saith one) like the double motion of the Lungs, by which they suck in, and breath out the air again. In the Petitionary part of Prayer, we desire either the bestowing of some good thing, or the preventing or removing of some evil from our selves, or the inflicting of some evil on Gods implacable Enemies: And in the Gratulatory part of Prayer, we return the praise of glory, of what we have received from God, unto God. Though the *Thanksgiving* part of Prayer be *most*, yet the *Petitionary* part of Prayer is *too much* neglected. It is Ungodliness to goe about any Business, or Journey, to fix our Abode, to use any Creature, Food, or Physick; without asking Gods leave and blessing in Prayer: Yea, it is a branch of *Atheism*; this Brat of irreligion is laid at the door of Atheism by *Psa. 14.* the *Psalmist*. Is it not a Lamentation, and 1, 3, 4. **H** should

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should it not be for a Lamentation, that so many Professours should be guilty of such Ungodliness?

Are there not many, that never prayed in all their lives? Professours are looked upon by the world as Praying people; but O! how is the world mistaken in many of them? *Thou Isa. 41. hast not called upon me, O Jacob!* Though 21, 23. *Jacob was a People sever'd into a Church-State, with an aim at Gods praise, yet Jacob pray'd not:* This was grievous unto God. Do not many Professours clearly evidence, that they are prayerless Souls, by their disobedience to the Preceptive, their impatience under the Providential Will of God? By their distrust of the All-sufficiency and Faithfulness of God? *She obeyed not the voice: she received not correction: she trusted not in the Lord: she drew not near to her God.* By their entring into so many Temptations? *Watch and Pray, lest you enter into Temptation.* By their being deceived, and labouring to deceive others in the things of God? *The Pastours are become brutish, and have not sought the Lord.* By their Back-slidings, and Apostasies? *And them that are turned back from the Lord, and those that have not sought the Lord.*

Doth not this sin speak out high contempt of God? That God is not entertained, so much as in a thought? He will not seek God: God is not in all his thoughts. That the thoughts of God are blasphemous? *What profit should we have, if we pray unto him?* Yea, *Doth not this sin speak out the hearts denial of God?*

What

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What saith the Psalmist? *The Fool hath said in his heart, there is no God: he calls not upon God.* To live without Prayer, is to be dead ^{Psa. 53.} while alive; for it is to live without God. The Families that *know not God*, and that *call not on his Name*, are the same. What? *Will ye not do so much as Pray unto God?* What can you do less for God, than by this homage, to own him for your Maker? Or less for your own Souls; than to beg their lives of him, whose hand of Justice is lift up against them? *Their Souls* (and theirs only) *shall live, that seek the Lord.* No Malefactors dye more ^{Jer. 10.} *unlamented*, than those, that when cast, will not beg for their lives. ^{25.}

How many also are there, that have cast off Prayer? How many have *restrained Prayer?* And that both when they have thought they have prayed themselves out of affliction, they have had no more to say to God, till under affliction again: and when they have for some time prayed for deliverance to no purpose. *This evil is of the Lord; why should I wait any longer?* This is worse, than not to pray at all. Not to pray at all; notes only the neglect of duty; but to cast off Prayer, a distaste of duty. But I shall be more particular. ^{Job 15.}

Though Prayer be the only Key, to unlock the Store-houses and Treasuries of all Blessings; yet how little hath this Key been used? I shall wave publick and private, and only instance in *secret Prayer*, and that both *sudden*, and *composed*, and *solemn*. *How few Professours have made conscience of Ejaculatory Prayer.*

H 2

Prayer?

Their ungodliness!

Prayer? How seldom have we *darted up* our Souls to Heaven, upon sudden emergent occasions, in some short desires? As when we are hearing, *Lord, set home this Word upon my heart*: When in Prayer our hearts are melting, &c. *Lord, suffer not my heart any more to be hardened from thy fear*: When we are about our worldly employments, *Lord, keep my heart with thy self, &c.* Are not some of us wholly unacquainted with this kind of Praying? *Not such a Dart* (saith one) *to be found in all their Quiver*. They know not how, in the midst of their worldly businesses, and company, yea in the midst of their solemn religious duties, in hearing, reading, conferring, praying, &c. to send their thoughts to give God a visit, though a short one, in a desire or two, to speak at least one or two heart-words unto him. Have not most Professours too much contented themselves with their *solemn Visits* of God, but between their solemn Duties have scarce ever conversed with God? What account shall we be able to give of our thoughts (the first-born of our Souls) from morning to evening? Is not this the highest improvement of them, to send them in ecstasies unto Heaven, and by them to converse with God? Do not the best of us find strangeness apt to grow between God and our Souls, between our set Duties? And may we not impute that strangeness to our omission of these more transient and occasional talkings with God? How many precious things, in Christian conference,

ference, in Sermons, in our solemn joynt Prayers, are lost, for want of present lifting up our hearts to God, for his presence therein, and blessing thereupon? How many blessed motions of the Holy Spirit, suggested to us in our particular Callings, are quench'd, for want of these short sallies of our Souls to Heaven, for more grace, that these sparks may be kept alive, yea blown into a flame? Neglect of this kind of Prayer is no small provocation: it grieves God: there is much unkindness in it, that God should be so gracious, as to let his door stand wide open at all times, and that he should assure us of welcome, when ever we come to him, and yet that we should not be so kind, as to step in to visit him, with a desire, hour after hour; and that, though we may thus visit him, and not neglect (but rather further) any business we have in hand, and without being uncivil to any company in which we are, He cannot but take this unkindly.

How few Professours have made conscience of closet-Prayer? Though Christ takes it for granted, that his Disciples will thus pray, and hath annexed a sweet promise to the due performance of this duty, *When thou prayest, enter into thy Closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father, which is in secret, and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly:* Retire thy self, get thee a place, set thy self a time, wherein thou mayest *vacare Deo*, be at leisure to make it thy business to pray to God, &c. Yet how

Neglect:
ing closet
Prayer,

Mat. 6.
6.

is this duty wholly omitted by some, and too too seldom performed by others? Satan prevails with some (otherwise honest Souls) to put off this duty from time to time, by telling them, either that they will but play the hypocrites therein; or that the time is not convenient, by reason either of some bodily, or of some soul distempers; or that this and the other worldly business must of necessity be dispatch'd at such a time, &c. O how little do such love the Lord, that are afraid to talk too secretly, or too often in secret with him! But alas! how many omit closet-Prayer altogether? Some content themselves with praying with others, either in the Church, or in the Family: How can such look upon themselves as Saints, whatever Profession they make? What? a Saint, and yet never desire any privacy between God and thy Soul? a Saint, and yet find no errand to invite thee to speak with God alone? Sure thou rather seekest to approve thy self to men, than to God. Thou mayest for a time be the worlds Saint, but God will at last uncase thee, and present thee before the eyes of all

Mat. 6. 5, 6. the world for an *Hypocrite*. The true Lover delights to visit his Friend, when he may find him alone: like that good man, who, when the set time for his closet-Prayer was come, would break from any company he was in, with this handsome speech, *I have a Friend that staves for me, Farewell*. Others put off this duty, by pretending they *pray alwayes*, every hour they are *darting up Ejaculations*

to Heaven. As the pretence of every day-Sabbath (saith one) comes just to no Sabbath; so the continual Praying of some carnal Professours, is not Praying at all. Ejaculatory Prayer should not hinder, but rather fit for, solemn set Praying. Fire must be kept upon the Altar continually, but that must not hinder the Morning and Evening Sacrifice. True Christians cannot be satisfied with a bit and away, but they must have their set meals. Others look at Closet-Prayer to be at the best but a Free-will Offering (as they term it) which they may offer, if they will, but will not own it a duty: Surely such are little sensible of their *heart-plagues*, or else they would alone, *one by one, make Prayers and Supplications.* Such either have not the Spirit at all, *1 Kings 8. 38,* or else but little, very little of the Spirit, or *39.* else they would be *Praying apart.* In all my *Zech.* observation, the ruines of Christians have *12. 10,* begun in their Closet neglects, either by omitting the duty totally, or by careless, formal, customary management of it. *11.* “The truth is (saith a late near Writer) this is “the first step towards Apostacy: Back-sliders “grow first out of acquaintance with God in “secret, then delight in this duty declineth “by little and little, then are they less frequent in their visits, upon which followeth “a casting off the duty, and yet they may appear great sticklers and zealots in publick “Ordinances; but if they recover not what “they have lost in their secret Trade, they “will ere long break here also.

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Jer. 10. 21. No sarer sign of an Hypocrite, than to neglect secret Prayer, it turns thee into a *Nebuchadnezzar*, into an Heathen; nay into a *Nebuchadnezzar*, a *Beast*: *They are become brutish, and have not sought the Lord.* Thou pretendest a love to God, didst thou love him, thou wouldst love to be with him, yea lovers covet to be alone, where they may more freely impart their mutual affections: perhaps in thy family, Religious worship of God by Prayer is (yet) kept up, to keep up thy credit with men, that thou mayst not be thought an Atheist, that thou mayst be trusted; an hundred things may keep thee, and hold thee to publick duties, but herein is the tryal of thy uprightness, what thou dost in secret for God, and with him: when the Masters part (the two great ones, God and World) then is the trial of thee, whose Servant thou art; but oh! when the Master is alone, then he is mostly neglected.

When alone thou art fittest for this duty of calling upon God; when the World is shut out, then thou hast a discharge from the cumbers of the Earth: an Heathen (*Scipio*) will tell thee; *I have never better company, than when I have no company; for then can I freely entertain my own thoughts, and converse with all the learned that have been in former ages.* But thou art called to greater honour, to improve thy solitude, to converse with God, when alone to have thy *Father with thee.*

Joh. 16. 32.

Yea God, like a modest lover, communicates most of his affections, to his people, when

when they are in *secret*: when *David* was in the night watches, then his Soul was filled with *marrow and fatness*, not that he wanted Gods presence in the day; for *seven times a day* he praised God, but his day-sacrifices yielded him not that marrow and sweetness, as he tasted in the night, when he was sequestred from all company and business. O! the *hidden Mannah* is the sweetest. *The Church* *Cant.*
leaneth on the breast of Christ in the Wilderness, *Hof. 2.*
and there he *speaks to her heart*. Unhappy *14.*
Soul! innumerable are thy losses, by neglecting Christs calls, *Come my Beloved, let us* *Cant. 7.*
goe forth into the Fields, there will I give thee *12.*
my loves: That God should so lovingly invite thee, to take a turn or two with him every day, in order to his opening his breast to thee, and yet be denied?

Again: When alone, and not with God, thou art lyable to Sathans foulest Temptations, to Atheism, Discontent, or Pride of heart: When the Devil finds the *house empty*, he will furnish you with company enough, *seven other worse Spirits*, if worse may be; you shall be employed: Fear a *Rape* at least, if God be not engaged to be a *little Sanctuary* in thy Closet and retirements: Sathan frequents the *high wayes*, and that Robber takes men aside into a corner, and then pillageth them of their treasure: He thought so to have dealt with Christ, and therefore takes him into a *Mountain alone*: When alone your dangers are greatest, therefore should your *8.*
cries to Heaven be most vehement. *Mat. 4.*

How

Not early enough in the Closet. How few Professours have observed the fittest time for secret Prayer? God would have us, in this sense, *Watch unto Prayer*: God would have us early to tell the world whose Servants we are, and that we dare not undertake any business, without first engaging God with us; that we dare not enter on Satans territories, without Christ, our great Champion with us: This *Post* should be sent to Heaven in the beginning of the day; for no sooner in the morning, do we begin to live, and stirr, but we need fresh succours and Auxiliaries from Heaven.

True Christians count that the sweetest air they breath in, which is the fruit of Prayer; and all things relish well with him, that run through this golden Pipe of Prayer; and therefore he is up early in his Closet, that he may receive all, this way, from the Lords bounty, and faithfulness: Therefore no sooner doth he open his eyes, but he opens his heart to God; and before he puts on a ragg, he must to Heaven in secret Ejaculations, at least, before he goes to his Closet, to pour out his Soul more plentifully before God: He expecteth no good day, unless it be begun with a good duty; and therefore my voice shalt thou hear in the morning, in the morning will I direct my Prayer unto thee: David prevented the dawning of the morning; nay he prevented God, (i. e.) his Providences and Favours which he expected, he loved to have them in the Channel of Prayer.

But

But alas ! how do Professours shuffle with God, by deferring and deferring ? And here, by many mischiefs attend.

The World, that Pest of Souls and Graces, is admitted, before we have got our Antidotes against the Infection of it ; Hence deadness of heart ensues , multitudes of worldly distractions ; so that after a few hours , the Soul hath no mind at all to speak with God ; but though it must to the Closet , yet there is it pestered with wandring thoughts, discontented thoughts , worldly thoughts ; so that the time which should be spent in pure Communion with God , is taken up in driving these *Fowls from the Sacrifice.*

Besides , God is an holy God , and jealous for his Name , and he esteemeth it a reflection on him , to be so neglected , that he must be served *last of all*, and therefore withholds his influences from the Soul , to condemn such falocy abuses of his great Name ; and then no wonder if thou be soon overcome with a world of vain impertinent cogitations. By neglect of early going into your Closets , you credit the World too much , as if it were more worthy of your *time and strength*, than the Lord is ; Whereas you should profess , that all your hours are Gods , and therefore you dare not , but *honour him with the first Prov. 3. 9.* *Fruits of all your increase* ; you will thereby sanctifie all the Harvest , all the Vintage , by presenting God with the *green Eares.*

By neglect of your Mornings , you hint to other Observers , as if you were not, *First*
to

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to seek God, and his Kingdom, and the righteousness thereof.

You neglect the fittest season, for then the mercies of the night are freshest, smell sweetest, which after a while, like Flowers, will lose their scent with us: Whilst the Iron is hot, it is our wisdom to strike; His *Mercies are renewed every Morning*, so should our Praises.

By entering on business without calling on God, you declare, you need not the Lords assistances, and that you depend not on him for every thing, but can make a shift to live without him: Whereas God feeds us from hand to mouth, and hath not left any stores with us, that we may make our addressments to him night and day, who must *water us every moment*. Poor Souls, did you but see your dangers, by reason of the three great Brigades of Enemies, the World, the Flesh, the Devil, you would not be so fool-hardy, to venture abroad, untill you have beseeched God, to help poor, needy, indigent Creatures: Remember, *You want as soon as you wake*, and those things you want, as none but a God can supply you: You need Divine Power to follow your Callings.

By neglecting this season, the Devil, and the World, have often made you forget, or omit the Duty for the day: You have no leisure in the Morning, and what then? the Devil fills thy hand with unexpected business, that the excuse grows stronger, and more plausible:

plausible : But must we serve the Slave , and neglect the Lord of glory ?

By omitting this hour , you are the unfit-ter for Family-worship; were the Instrument tuned before, it would be the fitter to play in comfort.

But oh ! what hazards dost thou run , not only by preferring other things and business before God , but by neglecting the first hour of the day , when thou art not sure of a second ? Thou purposest such an hour to pray , but what is thy Life save a *Vapour*, which may expire before that hour ?

CHAP. XIV.

The miscarriages of Praying Professours about Prayer.

7ly. **T** Here is not only *Ungodliness* in *Praying* not Praying , (Prayerless Souls Professors worshipping God no more than miscarria-Beasts, an Oxe, or an Ass, &c.) ges, but in *Praying amiss*. And O ! how many wayes do Professours fail in and about this Duty, both *before*, and *in*, and *after* ?

First , How do Professours fail before their *before* entrance upon this Duty of Prayer ? the Duty.

Their ungodliness.

**Neglect-
ing Me-
ditation,** 1. *By neglect of Meditation : Few can say, Consider my Meditation. Have not we rush'd upon this Duty, before we have meditated of Psa. 5. 1. the God we were approaching to ? What an holy God he is, and how unworthy we are to take his Name into our mouths ? What a consuming fire he is, and what dry stubble we are ?*

**his Holi-
ness,** Have not we rush'd into Gods Presence, as the Horse rusheth into the battel ?

**Omnisci-
ency,** Have we considered, that his eyes are piercing, as flames of fire ? That all things are naked and open (as it were dissected) before him, with whom we have to do ? We have not

13. *set God before our eyes : neither have we believed, that he is as certainly an Observer of us, as we are with our selves. Our thoughts would not be so low, so earthly, so distracted, did we believingly consider into whose Presence we are coming.*

**Omnipo-
tency,**

Have we considered Gods Almightyness ? That He can do more for us, than we can ask or think ? He that cometh to God (in Prayer) should believe that God is, that He is the Strength of Israel, that what we are to beg of God, Pardon of Sin, Victories over our Lusts, &c. are Mercies beyond the Creatures power to reach forth to us ; but the Lords arm is not shortened, that he can not help.

**Gods
goodness
and
grace,**

Have we meditated on Gods bounty, pity, and tender compassions ? As one more ready to give, than we to ask ; as one who giveth liberally, and upbraids not with our oft coming ? We want vast thoughts of the great good.

goodness and mercy of God : we have base beggerly thoughts of God , as if we should trespass too much upon him , and weary him by coming to oft to his door.

Have we mused upon the Faithfulness of God? his Faith-
Who is under engagements to relieve us , to fulness,
ease us, to be found of us, when we seek him
with our whole hearts. *And this is the confi-* 1 John
dence that we have in him , that if we ask any 5. 14.
thing according to his will, he heareth us.

Have we meditated of the Way , by whom of the
we must come to God? How daring are Souls Way unto
to venture on an *absolute* God? How is the God.
new and consecrated Way neglected? How is *Odi De-*
Christ laid by , as if there were no need of a *um abso-*
Mediatour , of an Advocate with the Father? *lutum.*
How seldome do we pass through *Gelgotha* , *Luth.*
to the heavenly *Jerusalem* ; and see, that *none*
can come to the Father , but by the Son? We
see not our need of *Incense and Odours* to be *Revel.*
mingled with our Sacrifices : little do we 8. 3, 4.
consider , that the Opportunity of speaking
with God, is the *price of blood*, of the precious
blood of the Son of God.

Have we meditated of our Sins, of those to of their
which we are by nature and custome most- Sins,
ly addicted ; and of those with which we
have since the last Duty polluted our Souls ?
From the want of Meditation hereof , ariseth
formality in Duties, the heart is not humbled
in Confession, neither is the Soul importunate
with the Lord for pardon and victory.

Have we made conscience to meditate upon our of their
Wants , what Graces we mostly need , what Wants,
we

we are most defective in? From this neglect we pray as if we did not pray, without zeal, earnestness and importunity: Whereas, had we viewed our Wants of God, of his Grace, Spirit, Protection, Mercy, and Presence, we should pray as for Life; and those stragling vain thoughts would hereby have been suppressed. When the Malefactor is begging his Life at the Barr, his Soul is not running adrift after every Feather, but he minds his business, 'tis Life, and his Life that is endangered, and therefore he gathers up all possible arguments, that may induce the Judge to abate of the rigour of Justice towards him. But how oft have we been on our knees, and have been ignorant of what ailes us, so that we might truly say, we knew not what to ask? When you goe to your Markets, you consider what you and yours want: but do we so, when we goe to our Spiritual Markets?

of Mercies received.

Have not we neglected to meditate of the Mercies of God, which we have received? Hence we come either customarily before God, or not with that holy boldness, as we should. One Mercy opens a door to another;

Hof. 2. The Valley of Achor was given as a door of hope to Israel: Forgetting the returns of Prayer, makes our hearts ake, and knees faint. We should book the passages of Gods grace, how he remembered us in our low condition, how he hath visited us day by day; when we have come in as the parched ground, we have found God a dew to us, and springs of water have appeared

in the wilderness : When we have come in before God with our *Shackles on our Feet*, with *Irons that have entred our Souls*, God hath made it a *Jubilee* ; he hath proclaimed the *acceptable year*, he hath let us out of the *Prison-house* ; and hath set our feet in a *large place* : When we have come in before God with guilt on our Souls, and with *fearful expectations*, how hath God given us the *white Stone*, and sent us away with his *blessing* ; and with gladness of heart ? The neglect of our *Diaries* of the *Providences* and *Mercies* of God ; the want of reflecting on all the *Rings* that God hath sent us, makes us more like *Slaves* than *Children*. Do we with *David* cry out, *Ma-* Psa. 40.
ny, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works,
which thou hast done ; and thy thoughts, which
are to us-ward : they cannot be reckoned up in
order unto thee : if I would declare and speak of
them, they are more than can be numbred.

Have not we neglected to meditate on the of the
great and wonderful things, that have been prevalen-
done upon the Prayers of Gods People ? We cy of
should have in everlasting remembrance, Prayer.
what a powerful Engine Prayer is. It hath Gen. 32.
held the bands of the Almighty : Jacob and 28.
Moses prevailed over God : It hath been a Exod.
Key to open and shut the Heavens ; Elias was a 32. 32.
man subject to like passions as we are, and he Jam. 5.
prayed earnestly, that it might not rain, and it 17, 18.
rained not on the earth, by the space of three
years, and six months : And he prayed again,
and the Heaven gave rain, and the Earth
brought forth her fruit. And O what wonderful

I things

things hath God promised to a Praying People! *Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not. Whatsoever ye ask in my Name, &c.* Here is more than *Herod* offered, that was but *half the Kingdom*; here is a *Whatsoever*. Did we appear before God with these *instances of grace*, and *promises*, fresh in our thoughts, we should not say, *What a weariness is it?* Or that *there is no profit in serving God*; and gallop through our duties as we are wont.

Not stirring up Grace received. 2. Another neglect before Prayer, is, *The not stirring up our Graces, before we set upon the Duty.* We too much rest on *habitual preparation*, whereas *actual* is necessary. He that leaps immediately from the *Shop* to the *Throne of Grace*, and labours not to quicken his dull Soul, and to leave worldly businesses behind him, (as *Abraham* his *Servants*, when he goeth to sacrifice) no wonder if he lose the Duty, and provoke the Lord, rather than be accepted with him. The Well is seldom so full, but that you may, nay you must, throw in a little, to fetch up the more. It is thought, by the redoubling of *David's* charge, that he found not his heart in a good frame, for the exalting of God, and therefore cries out so vehemently, *Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me praise his holy Name: Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his benefits.*

When Praying. 2ly. How have we failed, when we have entred upon the Duty? And that in *Invocati-*

on, in Confession, in Petition, and in Thanks-
giving?

1. *In our Invocations?* We call God *Fa-ther*; and yet how *unlike* are we unto him: we *re-semble* not him we call Father: we *re-vere*nce not him we call Father: we *trust* not to him with that confidence we would, to re-
ceive of our Fathers of the *Flesh*: we fear, when we ask *Bread*, he will give us a *Stone*: we have lower thoughts of Gods bowels, than of our own: we think our selves more pitiful, better natur'd, than God himself: If I were a Mother, and my Child in distress, I should deny him nothing.

2. *In our Confessions of Sin?* We are not Con-
full, and free, and ingenuous: we *sit* with *felson*, *Rachel* upon some *Idols*: we do not declare *Psa. 119*
our wayes unto him, but rather *cover our trans-* 26.
gressions as Adam. Few can clear themselves
as *Job* did. You will perhaps confess, *we Job 31.*
have erred and strayed from thy wayes like lost
sheep: We have left undone; &c. but still in *Dolus in*
generals. *David* was in this gravelled, *When* *generalibus.*
I kept silence, my bones waxed old, through my *Psa. 32.*
roaring all the day long. But you descend not
to particulars, or it to particulars, yet the
Benjamin is reserved, loth to let *Benjamin*
goe, loth to confess envy, pride, breach of
vowes, want of love to Saints, loving the
rich only, neglecting the poor. You will
confess what every man knows you are guilty
of, or what every man is addicted to; but
you shame not your selves, by instancing in
the particular neglects and commissions, by
I 2 which

Their ungodliness.

which you chiefly provoke the Lord: the *Agags* are not brought to execution, the *best of the Cattel* are kept back, one *wedge* is hid in the Tent. Or if you confess most particularly, yet it is without hatred of the sins confessed: You confess sin, yet hug it, bosome it, plead for it, within one quarter of an hour: You confess sin, but without self-*abhorrence*: you loath it not, as the *Plague* of your hearts. *I abhor my self*, saith Job: This implies a *dislike*, an *hatred*, an *indignation* against, an utter *alienation* from, and an *opposition* against sin. God knows how little of this is mixed with the Confessions of most Professours.

Petition, 3. *In their Petitions?* Both *Matter*, and as to the *Manner*, and *End*? Have not we been faulty **Matter,** in the *Matter*, Have they been alwayes for the *best things*? Life, Liberty, Estate, &c. are desired; but Grace, Victory over Pride, Passions, Worldliness, &c. lye unsought for. We fail also, when we pray simply that we may not suffer; for there is no foundation in the Promise for such a Prayer, and we may not pray, save for what God hath promised.

Manner, Have not we fail'd in the *Manner*? Have we alwayes pray'd with *Earnestness*, *Humility*, *Faith*, *Sincerity*, &c. Hath the whole man been employed? Few can say, as *David*, *But I Prayer*. He was all Prayer: or all **Psa.** of *David*, or in *David*, was herein employed. Few can say, *With my whole heart have I* **109. 4.** *intreated thy favour*. Alas! few pray effectually. **119. 58.**

ally. The heart and soul is not at work in the Duty. It is *the effectual fervent Prayer that James avails*. We pray as if we had a mind God *5. 16.* should deny us. We are too much like Children, scribbling over a piece of Paper, which *Qui frigide rogat,* when they have done, lay it aside, or break *docet necit,* or think no more of it. We have not *gare.* continued in Prayer: we have not back'd our *Colof. 4.* Prayers with Prayers, reinforced them: we *2.* have soon fainted: we have not been the right seed of Jacob, *I will not let thee goe, untill thou b'ess me:* we soon faint, and our desires expire.

Have not we fail'd in the *End*? May I not *End.* say as the Apostle James, *Ie ask, and receive James* not, *because ye ask amiss, that you may consume 4. 3.* it upon your Lusts. Hath not our level been too low? We should have made *Gods Glory* our *End*, and we have made *Self*, to quiet Conscience, to obtain pardon of sin, rather than purity of heart and life: *They assemble for Corn and Wine.* You have been perhaps ear- *Hof. 7.* nest for the pardon of your own and *Englands 14.* sins, and yet selfish in all: You fear (and well you may) temporal Plagues, you are afraid that *Sodoms* sins may bring down fire and brimstone; and therefore, for your own sakes, rather than Gods, you pray, and with some vehemency; but your *End* is still too low. Never do you pray aright, till you pray more for *Christs sake, than for your own:* for his glory; rather than for your own present, future: temporal, or eternal advantages. It is one thing to seek our selves, and

another thing to seek God in a duty. They that pretended so highly, begin to expostulate with God, *Wherefore have we fasted, and thou seest not, and takest no knowledge?* Mens Lusts Pray, rather than their Graces. Pride and self-love endite the Petitions; You have been suckling your lusts, whilst seemingly devout: *You make Provision for the flesh*, whilst about spiritual work, and whilst your inward man seems to be exercised.

Thanks-
giving.

4. *In our Thanksgivings?* who is free from guilt in the gratulatory part of Prayer? Some bless God for Justification, Sanctification, Adoption, &c. and are strangers to these Privileges, yea, if catechised know not what these mercies are, no more than Parrots know what they prattle: Others if, like the Leapers they are cleansed, yet return not to bless the Lord: They are large in *Petitions*, but very sparing in their *Praises*. Unthankful Beggars are an abomination to God and man. We should be thankful for the least mercy; but though we have had the honour to be admitted into the Presence Chambers as *Favourites* (an honour not vouchsafed to the most of mankind) yet we are sullen, and slow to return Praises for so great a vouchsafement: You have not come to dry breasts, you are every day full of mercy; but alas! *You render not according to what you have received*, therefore *wrath is against you*. Hast thou had no meetings in Prayer, no enlargements, no desires to fear the Lord, no importunities, no wrestlings? why yet it is mercy, that

2 Chron.
32.

that thou livest upon the patience and bounty of God : 'Tis much , that thou shouldst have a being , and be preserved to this day : 'Tis a wonder he should feed thee , cloth thee , protect thee , strive with thee , suffer thee , who art but *dust and ashes* , to speak with him : The last night thou might'st have lain on a bed of fire , or by the hedge , or have been in the great deeps ; but alas ! few so ready to *praise* , as to *pray* . We are too much like the Vagabonds , when we have what we come for , away we goe , and come no more till pinching necessity drives us : Yea , we too oft aggravate our miseries , and over-look the benefits we enjoy , that are mix'd with our crosses.

3ly. *How have we , when our Prayers have been ended , fail'd of our duties toward God ,* After the Duty.
by running post hast from the Throne of Grace to the World , if not to our Lusts ?
Not considering how our hearts were in time of Not examining
duty , whether straitned , or enlarged ; whe- how the
ther composed , or distracted ; whether we Duty
had the face of God toward us , or his face hath been
vaied ; whether we were lively , or lifeless ; done,
dead-hearted , or quickned ; serious , or
slight ; what Faith was stirring , what Repen-
tance exercised ? The Church and People of
God observed their hardness in duty : Why Isa. 63.
hast thou hardned our hearts from thy fear ? We 17.
should look back upon our Prayers , that we
may be humbled for all our vain thoughts ,
untowardness , distractions , and unbelief in
the duty : and we should do it , then , whilst

we are in the highest capacity to know the miscarriages of the Soul, what the aggravating circumstances thereof are, &c. And not only in order to *Humiliation*, but *Reformation*, that for the future we may not dare to touch the Mount of Gods Presence with such beastly frames.

quickly
losing
what was
got in the
Duty,
In case we were in a good frame in the Duty, *Did we labour to retain the influences of the Ordinance upon our heart?* Did not we let the fire goe out again? Have not we, like some in a great sweat, gone into the open air too soon, and took a cold? That's dangerous. *David* was more careful to maintain his fresh and lively frames, and therefore he intreateth the Lord to *keep the same in his Servants heart for ever.*

not looking for an answer,
Psa. 5. 3.
85. 8.
2 Cor. 12. 8.
Hab. 2. 1.
How have we been faulty, in *not believing that our Prayers shall be answered*. We direct our Prayer unto God, but we do not look up, till God look down, as *David*. We do not hearken what God the Lord will speak. *Paul* observed how long the Lord was silent to his Prayer, *For this I besought the Lord thrice, and yet no answer.* O! when shall we resolve with *Habbakkuk*, to stand upon our watch, and look and see what he will say to us? The neglect of this hath bred so many Formalists in our Congregations. After we have put our Prayers into Gods hands, we never mind them more. We would be angry with *Beggars*, if they begg'd an almes, and away presently, as careless of answers.

The sincerity of thy heart would be more evidenced, if thou didst consider what returns thou hast that thou mayst bless God for them, and improve them for God, and in case of denials, to be of a troubled Spirit as *Hannah* was, for that her Prayer for a Child was so long denied. Not blessing God for answers. *1 Sam. I. 15.*

What mournings hast thou for that thy Pride, Worldliness, Unbelief, hardness of Heart, &c. are not yet pardoned and subdued. Poor creature, thou continuest in the road of Duriy, but observest not whether God hears thee, or not, *Saul* went beyond thee: He observed, and was troubled, that God answered him not by Urim, nor yet by Prophets. *1 Sam. 28. 6.* Have not we by carelesness, by returning to our vomits and mires, intercepted our own Prayers.

Have not we torn our own Petitions, and snatch'd them out of Gods hands? Behold the Lords hand is not shortned that it cannot save, neither is his ear heavy that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear? their own Petitions. *Isa. 59. 1, 2.*

How seldome have we took *Bernards* advice in his gloss upon, *Let us lift up our hearts with our hands*, that is (saith he) let us pray and endeavour. We love to employ God to subdue our sins, &c. But we sit idle, we hate taking pains; we are not co-workers with God. I may say unto you, as *Christ*, *I goe away, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins.* The Heathen shall know that the Not joyning endeavours. *Oremus & Laboramus.*

house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity: because they trespassed against me, therefore hid I my face from them. Then shall
Mic. 3. they cry unto the Lord, but he will not hear
† them, he will even hide his face from them, at that time, as they have behaved themselves ill in their doings. Prayer is a Key to open Heaven to Believers; but it may be so managed, as to open Hell to thee.

CHAP. XV.

Their slighting the written Word of God, especially in not reading, and meditating on it, as they ought.

Professours despising Gods written Word. 8ly. **S***Lighting of the written word of God is another piece of ungodliness, which English Professours have been very guilty of. There is not a surer sign of despising any person, than the setting light by what he saith unto us; for according to the honour we give unto the Speaker, the words spoken will be of weight with us. But alas! how hath the Bible, Gods written word, been undervalued by us?*

Evidenced in their not crediting it. *How little have we credited Gods written word? And yet it is natural for us to believe whatsoever is said by one, of whose truth we are*

are confident. Have not *Scripture-affirmations* been doubted of by us? How little hath our knowledge of them been attended with *building a Christian life* upon them as a *foundation*? Have we believed that *Scripture commands* come from God, and are most just and fit for him to lay upon us? Hath this *belief* brought forth *obedience*? Have we believed that *Scripture-threats* are *Gods-threats*, and will therefore be performed to every impenitent Sinner? And hath this *belief* kept us from *sin*, or promoted repentance? Have *Scripture promises* been believed to be *Gods-promises*, and that therefore all the *absolute* ones shall certainly be performed to the Elect, and all the *conditional* ones, to those that perform the conditions? And hath this *belief* stirr'd us up, and *help'd* us to *perform the conditions*?

God hath magnified his Word above all his *Psalm*. Name; but so have not we. We are apt to 138. 2. be afraid at the appearances of the great God Not ho- in his extraordinary works in the World; but nouring it who trembleth at the appearances of God in above the Scriptures? And yet God appears more Gods in the glory of his Majesty therein, than in all other Names, his other works, whether of Creation, or of common Providence. God maketh more ac- Mat. 5. count of his written Word than of Heaven 8. and Earth: he had rather lose Heaven and Earth than one jota or tittle of his Word.

But have not we accounted it no great matter *Accounted it a* to swerve a little from the written Word of God? *small* Yea have not we made a light matter of leav- *matter to* *swerve* *ing from it.*

ing undone what is therein required, and of doing what is therein forbidden? Were the Scriptures high in our esteems, did we look upon God's testimonies as wonderfull things, our very Souls would be in keeping them?

Psal.

119.129

Thy testimonies are wonderfull, therefore doth my Soul keep them.

Account-
ing ten-
der Con-
sciences
more nice
than wise.

Rev. 6.

9.

Account-
ing it a
strange
thing.

Hof. 8.

12.

Making
the
Word a
stalking-
horse,

Have not we accounted them fools that have preferr'd the Word before whatsoever hath been near and dear unto them in this World? Have not we accounted them more nice than wise, who have been slain for the Word, who have lost Name, Liberty, Livelihood, Friends, Relations, yea Life it self, and endured all Torments and Tortures, rather than they would offend the written Word of God in any one thing, either by omission, or commission?

God hath written to us the great things of his Law (or word) but have they not been accounted a strange thing, a thing that we should have got little good, if we had obeyed them, and little hurt by disobeying them? Have not we used the Word as a stranger, only for our own ends, to serve our own turns, as we have had advantage thereby?

Have not we made the Word a stalking horse for our own carnal designs? Have not we pretended very great Zeal for the Word, when all the while we have been Zealous for self, either our own opinions and persuasions, or our own honour and greatness, or our own livelihood? Have not we, like boat-men, looked one way, and rowed another, cryed, the Word of the Lord, but meant the other thing?

Have

Have not even Scripture Doctrines *eb'd* and *flowed* upon *politick* considerations?

How seldome have we *discoursed* with others *Not* talk-
Scripturally? The Scholar is upon every oc-^{ing} of it.
casion *discourfing* of those *Notions*, which *Dent.* 6.
he *prizeth*; but hath not our *speech* *bewrayed* 7.
our low esteems of the Word?

Have not we been *willingly* and *contentedly* *Willing*;
ignorant of *Scripture-discoveries*? So is not ^{ly}igno-
the Scholar of those *Notions* which he affects ^{rant} of it:
and *valueth*. Have not our hearts *cryed* out *Job.* 21.
many times unto the Bible, *depart* from me ^{14.}
for we desire not the *knowledge* of *Gods* *wayes*,
either as to *worship*, or *manners*, and that be-
cause *knowledge* is an *obligation*, yea a *provo-*
cation to *duty*, and a *sting* in case *duty* be *neg-*
lected?

What things we prize we search into; But *Not*
how little have we *searched* the *Scriptures*, as *searching*
diggers in *Mines* do *search* for *gold* and *silver* ^{the} *Scryp-*
in the Earth, as the Word *signifieth*? And ^{tures.}
this leads me to those two main *Evidences* of *Jo.* 5.
our *slighting* the written Word of God, our ^{39.}
not *reading*, and *not* *meditating* upon it, as we
ought, which I shall a little enlarge upon. ^{Not} *read-*
^{ing} *them.*

How have we been *guilty* of *not* *reading* the *Dent.*
Scriptures as we *ought*? That every one *ought* ^{31.} *11.*
to *read* them, is so *evident*, that there is no *Math.*
way for the *Papists* to keep men from *believ-* ^{12.} *3. 5.*
ing this *truth*, but by keeping of them from ^{21.} *16.*
reading the *Scripture*. No *business* can *dis-* ^{Luk.} *10.*
charge any from this *duty*, and yet how is ^{26.}
this *evident* *duty* *neglected*? Some have not *Dent.*
been so *farr* *wrought* upon, as from *sense* of ^{17.} *19.*
their

Their ungodliness!

their own ignorance and blindness in the things that concern their Everlasting welfare, and from conviction, that they can know such things only by the help of the written Word of God, to take up firm resolutions to undertake the study of the Scripture?

At all.

Others notwithstanding their resolutions never set upon the reading of the Bible over. They have seen no excellency in this book: they have seen more in a piece of Philosophy, in a rational discourse of Divinity, in an ingenious History, in a politick discourse, yea in a Romance, or in a Play, *Polititian-like*, who preferr'd an *Ode* in *Pindar* before all *Dauids Psalms*.

Often enough.

How many read the Bible *too seldom*, thinking it too much to read it dayly, to spend one hour therein every day? Have not some spent several hours in a day, in reading some good books of mens inditing, but not a quarter of an hour in reading Gods-book? *I even hate mine own works* (said *Luther*) and oft times wish they were burnt; because I fear lest they should withdraw men from reading the Scriptures.

Arighr,
not rever-
ently.
2 Sam.
7. 18.

How much greater is the Number of those, that have not read the Bible *aright*? Are not all of us in this number; When have we prepared for the reading of the Scriptures, as becomes those that are going in unto God (so going into the Sanctuary, where the Word of God was kept, is tearmed.)

Tremblingly.

Have not we read *fearlessly*? When we were going to take the Bible into our hands, have

have we trembled at the Word? lest we should not sanctifie the Name of God, yea, lest we should take the Name of God in vain in our reading? *I sa. 66.2*

Have not we read *heedlessly*? Not diligently marking the *Duties* commanded, the *Sins* forbidden, the *Rewards* promised, and the *Punishments* threatned therein? Have not our thoughts been wandering and gadding, and not fixed upon what we read? When did we attend to Scripture words, as heedfully, as *Benhadad's* Messengers did to the words of *Ahab*? *I Kings 20.33.*

Have not we read *unbelievingly*? Not believing that the Scripture is the Word of God; that whatever we read therein is true and good; that the Spirit of God, the Inditer of every word in this Book, did particularly intend our good in every Verse; that in the Scripture Life and Death is set before us; yea, that Scripture words are *our Life*? *Be- lievingly Dcut. 29. 9. Rom. 15. 4. Josh. 1. 5. com-*

Have not we read out of *custome*, and not *par'd conscienciously*, in obedience to the command with of God? *Hebr.*

Have not we read for *wrong ends*? Either to *satisfie our curiosity*, and not to *regulate our hearts and lives*: or to have *matter of discourse*, but not *matter of practise*; to have Scripture at our *tongues end*, not at our *hearts*: or *only to know*, being ashamed to be ignorant of those things, which all Christians know; and to be able to say nothing of such matters, which we cannot but have occasion divers times in company to talk of, *but not to do*?

When

Psa.
119.
105.

Quid est
Scriptu-
ra Sacra
nisi qua-
dam E-
pistola
Omnipo-
tentis
Dei ad
Creatu-
ram su-
am.
Greg.
Hof. 8.
12.

With
Prayer.

Jer. 4.3.

When did we read the Scriptures with this particular intention; that they might be a *Lamp unto our feet, and a Light unto our paths*? That we might thereby be help'd to *order our conversation aright*? When did we read the Bible with the same attention; reverence, and resolution, to follow every rule therein; as we think we would (if we had lived when Christ was upon Earth) received a Letter from him, directing us what to believe and do, that we might be saved? Or as we think we should a Book writ immediately by the finger of God, as he wrote the Ten Commandments in two Tables? Why, the Bible is Gods Letter to every one of us in particular, written by himself, though mediately: *I have written to him the great things of my Law*: To him, it is in the singular number, because to every man and woman particularly. When did we read the Bible, as Children read the last Will and Testament of their deceased Parent?

Have not we read the Scripture, *without begging of God his Spirit*, to help us to understand what we read, and to practise what we understand; at least, not so importunately, as we would, if we had been begging for our Lives, at the Barr of a Judge? Have not we sown this seed among thornes, in unplowed hearts, and have not so much as prayed to God, to take away the heart of stone, and to give an heart of flesh, a teachable, plyable, tractable spirit, ready to receive every Divine impression? O! when shall we make
con-

conscience of reading the Scriptures daily as we ought? *The Emperour of Heaven* (saith *Gregory the great*) *the Lord of Angels and Men hath sent to you, that which concerns your life; and will you (still) neglect to read it with a fervent and zealous Spirit?*

How guilty have we been in not meditating in the Word of God as we ought? How little, if at all, have we dwelt in our serious thoughts upon the matters contained in the written Word of God, to the end we might understand how much they do concern us, and that our hearts may thereby be raised to some holy affections and resolutions? Though meditation be *commanded* as a chief *means* sanctified by God *for the keeping of his Word*; though *Jo. h. 1.* we cannot be *holy and happy* without it *altogether*; though it be one of the *Profitablest Psa. 1.* duties of a Christian: the *Reader and Studier 2.* of Scripture may *see* the beauty, and *smell* the sweetness of the flowres that grow in this Divine Garden; but it is the *Meditator*, the *Christian-Bee*, that *gathers* the honey out of them; though it be the duty by which the Soul *digesteth* truths, and draweth forth their strength for its nourishment and refreshment; yea the duty by which all other duties are improved; yet how much is this duty neglected by all sorts of Professours, because though it be the *delightfullest* task to the *Spirit*, yet it is the *most tedious* to the *Flesh*, that ever men on earth were employed in.

Have not many been long Professours, and yet if they would tell all the truth, they will

Not meditating.

At all.

confess they *never spent one hour together in mediating* on the most weighty Scripture-truths, on God, on Mans Estate by Creation, Degeneration, Regeneration, Glorification, on Christ, on the Vanity of the Creature, on the Beauty of Holiness, on Death, on Judgement, on Heaven, and Hell. “*Meditation* (saith Mr. *Baxter* in his *Saints rest*) “*is confessed to be a duty by all*, but by constant neglect *denied by most*: and (I know “not by what fatal customary security it “comes to pass, that) men, that are very “tender Conscienced toward most other duties, yet do as easily overslip this, as if “they knew it not to be a duty at all: they, “that are presently troubled in mind, if they “omit a Sermon, a Fast, a Prayer in publick, “or private, yet were never troubled that “they have omitted Meditation, (perhaps “all their life time unto this very day.)

Arighr.

How few have mannaged this duty *arighr*? Hath not that which we call *Meditation* been *Study* only? Hath not some *controversial* point, or some nice *speculation* been the matter of our Meditation? Hereby we evidence that we have not so great spiritual hunger after Righteousness, as we should: Hungry men (saith one) do not use to stand and pick bones, when they have meat enough to eat. Hath not our end in meditating been only the *increasing* of our *knowledge*, and not the *improving* of our *knowledge*? Have not we *begun* this work *without God*? When we were going about to Meditate, have not we neglected Prayer for help from Heaven

to go through with the work, though without God we can neither know, resolve upon, nor perform what is good; for from him, yea from *his own good pleasure comes both the will and the deed*? Have not we idled away our meditating seasons? If we have sequestered our selves from worldly businesses, and company, for meditation at any time, have not we idled away that time, by suffering our thoughts to gad and wander up and down to no purpose, to be sure not to fetch in considerations for the stamping holy impressions upon our hearts and lives? Have not we in meditating been *without a due sense of Gods presence*? May not we cry out, *surely the Lord Gen. 28. was in such and such a place where I have been* 16. meditating, *and I knew it not, i. e.* I considered it not. Hath not the work of our understandings in this business been to *retain*, and not to *convey* truth into the heart? Have our understandings *represented* what should work holy affections and resolutions *aright*? Have they presented things *good*, of a Divine and Heavenly nature as God, Christ, Heaven, &c. in their *prime and beauty*? Have they presented things in their nature simply *evil*, as Sin, Gods wrath, Hell, *at their worst*? Have not we left off meditating before we attained the end of Meditation? before holy affections and resolutions are wrought? Have not we *rush'd out* of this duty as well as *rush'd into* it? Have not we gone from this work, as a *bird out of the snare, with joy and speed*? Have we ended as well as begun this

Their ungodliness.

work *without God*? not praying to God for *strength to perform*, what we have been enabled by grace to resolve upon for God; and for *pardon* of what hath been amiss in the duty? O! when will English Professours be prevailed with to make conscience of this duty of duties? "I once more intreat thee (to use Mr. *Baxters* words) as thou art a man that maketh conscience of a revealed duty, and that darest not wilfully resist the Spirit, as thou valuest the high delights of a Saint, and the Soul-ravishing exercise of Heavenly Contemplation, and as thou art faithfull to the peace and prosperity of thine own Soul, that thou speedily and diligently set upon this great duty.

Considerations
against
sighting
Gods
written
Word.

Prov.
13. 13.
Isa. 5.
24.

O! what a mighty blessing is it to have such a book, wherein are written by God himself the great counsels of his will concerning mans Eternal Salvation? What a sin is it then to have low, mean, yea vile and base thoughts of it? Is not our sighting of the Word of the Lord the cause of all the wickedness in our hearts and lives? Whence are all our omissions and commissions, but because we make a light matter of sinning against the Scriptures? Certainly this great provocation hath a great hand in our miseries, and threatneth utter ruine to us. *Who so despiseth the Word shall be destroyed: Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff; so their root shall be rottenness, and their blosome shall go up as dust; because they have cast away the Law of the Lord of Hosts, and despised the Word of the Holy one of Israel.*

CHAP.



CHAP. XVI.

Their miscarriages about the Promises.

9ly. **M**uch Ungodliness is also evidenced in Professors miscarriages about the Promises of the Word; the promises being the great promoters of godliness in the world, not only as arguments to induce it, by shewing how God will reward it; but likewise as principles of godliness, or the chief instrument, whereby God makes Souls partakers of the Divine nature.

1. How little do we believe the truth of the Promises? How little do we believe that the Spirit of God and glory rests on them, that suffer for Christ, and his Gospel? and that as tribulations do abound for Christ, so shall consolations by him? or that we shall have an hundred fold advantage by any loss we sustain for Christ and his concernments? All that fear of man, all that cowardise, all those tremblings of heart, that are upon Professors this day; all that enmity against the Cross of Christ, which appears on the faces, and hearts of men, are clear demonstrations how little the promises for the bearing up under suffering, for the deliverance out of suffering, or rewarding of suffering.

suffering for Christ are believed: We cannot set the *Promises* against all *Crosses*.

Not prizing them enough.

2. *How low are our esteems of the Promises of God*, of the great and faithful God, in comparison of what they are concerning the Promises of honest and sufficient men? I appeal to thee, if a King should promise thee a thousand pound *per annum*; whether it would not more rejoyce thine heart, than the Promises of *eternal Life*, which God hath made unto thee, do? With how few Professours are the *Promises* of God exceeding great and precious?

2 Pet. 1.
4.

Not admiring Gods condescension therein.

3. *How little do we admire at Gods stooping so low, as to oblige himself by promise to such varlets as we?* God might have dealt with us by way of absolute *Soveraignty* and *Dominion*, imposing only upon us commands to do our duty, without adjoyning any promise of a reward, he being our *Creatour*, and we his *Creatures*: It is his great condescension, to deal with us by way of *Promise*, which is not only an inlinuation and signification of what he will do, but a laying a bond or obligation upon himself to do so and so. Herein God did more condescend unto Man, than unto the fallen Angels: they have not any one, not the least Promise of any good, made by God unto them. And yet how little are we in admiration?

Not blessing God for them.

1 Jo. 2.

25.

4. *How little do we bless the Lord for those Jewels, that are wrapt up in the Promises; for the Fruit, that hangs on this Tree of Life? This is the Promise, that he hath promised us,*

even

even eternal Life. A Crown is promised : *He shall receive the Crown of Life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.* A King-
dome is promised : Hearken, my beloved Brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in Faith, and heirs of the Kingdome, which he hath promised to them that love him?
 Yet how unthankfull? This doubtless proceeds from our diffidence of the reality and faithfulness of the Promiser, and therefore that shall be another Question.

5. *How little do we relye upon God, to make good his Promises?* How many think God Promiser as changeable as themselves? Men in Boats, being in constant motion upon the Waters, are apt to fancy, that the Land and Trees move, as they themselves do: So many Christians think, as oft as they fail in point of strict duty, God will fail too. Who layes all the stress upon the faithfulness of him that hath promised? Do not we lean partly to the Promises, and partly to our own endeavours, and the means we use, and so divide our dependencies betwixt the Promises of God, and our own Duties, to bring in pardons, peace, holiness, or any outward comforts?

6. *Do not we eye Promises, without eyeing Christ?* Do not we dote on the Bracelets, but neglect the Friend? Do not some set a greater value on the Promise, than on Christ's Person: Though the Promises are only the Crystal Streams of that River of Life, which proceedeth out of the Throne of God, and the Lamb;

yet do not we make them the *Primary*, and not the *Secondary* Object of Faith? Who look upon Promises only as Instruments, to bring Christ and the Soul together?

Not
hoping
for the
good of
them.

7. *How little do we hope for the good laid up in the Promises?* What fearful expectations have many Professours, though they *walk close with God*, though they *abstain from that which is evil*, though they *fulfill after God to the utmost of their power*, though they *design which way to walk in all well-pleasing, being fruitful in every good word and work*; yet how cast down, how discouraged are they? how do they pine away, and their hearts dye within them? how are they as Reeds shaken, as Ships driven, and cannot *cast anchor within the Vail*? Moses himself was shaken, when a deliverance of Gods own promising met with opposition: *And Moses said, Lord, wherefore hast thou so evil intreated this people? why* *Exod. 5. 22, 23. is it that thou hast sent me; For since I came to Pharaoh, to speak in thy Name, he hath done evil to this people, neither hast thou delivered thy people at all.* It is Gods wonted course, to bring signal mercies under a sentence of death, before we enjoy them: and yet how prevailing is unbelief, when God deferrs, and the Promise is obstructed? How faint are we? Our hope is not lively.

Not wait-
ing for
the good
of them.
Heb. 10.
36.

8. *How little do we wait, till that good, which is in the Promises, be given out to us?* I may truly say to many, yea to most, *Ye have need of Patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye may receive the Promise.*

Sure,

Sure, *The Vision is for an appointed time*, and God would have us to wait, though it tarry; *Hab. 2.* because it will not tarry, beyond the time appointed by the wise and faithful God: But, though God never fail of *his* own time, yet he seldome comes at *ours*, and then we run into unbelief, if not impatency of spirit. How oft do we *Antedate* the Promise, and set it a time before Gods time? *Patience* hath *Jam.* not *its perfect work*, so that if God save us out of our miseries, we shall not be able to say as the Church, *Loe, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us: This is the Lord, we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoyce in his salvation..* *Isa. 25.* This limiting the holy One of Israel, either as to means, (when we tye up the Lord to work by wayes and causes of our own) or to *dayes* and *hours* of our own bold and impudent prescription, is no small provocation. *How oft did they provoke him in the Wilderness: and grieve him in the Desert? Yea, they turned back, and tempted God, and limited the holy One of Israel.* *Psa. 78.* Some will wait a month or two for the Promise of Pardon, that they may have peace in their Consciences, and for Promises of outwards; but when they see nothing comes of their waiting, then *there is no hope*, why should I wait on the Lord any longer? That Wretch waited a little, but not long enough. *2 Kings 6. 33.* We allow time to the *Physician* to cure us, we yield, that he knows the fittest time to apply cordials; but we yield not so much to God: We would have the smarting

1 Sam.
27. 1.

ing Plaister pulled off, before the Wound be healed; whereas it is best for us, to have it kept on. *David's* foot was almost slipt, when he saw the Promise of the Kingdom deferred, he makes a bad inference from the delay, *One day I shall fall by the hand of Saul.* We do not stay our selves on the Promises, till the thing promised be given into our bosomes. *David waited patiently*; but so do not we: Our hearts are not at rest, but we stagger like Drunkards, we reel this way, and that way, but are not established and settled: *In this we are not confident, that God who hath promised, cannot lye, and therefore will perform the word, that is gone forth from an unfeigned lip: We are too hasty in our desires, whereas God knows the fittest season for the Promise to bring forth: We shall have it, when the time is come; but we hasten the birth, and spoyl the conception. The Prophet of old complains of some, that they were of an hasty heart: whereas, He that believeth, maketh not hast.* God deferrs, to put an edge on our desires, a value on what is promised, and to exercise our Faith. The Word, that is gone forth out of the mouth of the God of truth, should quiet; but it doth not. *I the Lord will hasten it in its time. The Lord will arise, and have mercy upon Zion, when the time to favour her, yea, when the set time is come.* And is not Gods time the best?

Isa. 35.
4.
Isa. 28.
16.

Isa. 60.
22.
Psa.
102. 13.

Abusing Promises. 9. *How have many abused, rather than applied Promises? How many dogs take the Children's*

Children's bread ? How many Hypocrites tast of the *forbidden fruit* ? Lay hold on that which doth not belong unto them ? When they read those sweet delicious promises of the pardon of Sin , of the love of God , of the treeness of grace , of the glory to come, they count them as theirs , whereas they are but *usurpers* , they set their *mark* on *another's goods* : they are *thieves and robbers* ; for they are *strangers to the Promises*. How many abuse the mercy of God in the Promises, so that even the Promises become an occasion of stumbling, whilst they continue in sin, in hopes of pardons through the Promises ? We are not led by the sweetness of the Promise to Repentance ; but rather harden our hearts, presuming of pardons on course from the God of grace : Gluttons surfeit soonest upon the greatest dainties : thus many venture to continue to *sin that grace may abound* ; hence Repentance is put off ; because men hope God will *abundantly pardon* , when ever the *wicked forsakes his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts*. The *Promises* are not made a *Sanctuary* unto which men fly *from sin* , but as a *Sanctuary* to protect them in their sinfull courses. God is *mercifull, slow to wrath* , he will *abundantly pardon* , &c. therefore &c. Do not we overlook all the *threatnings* and terrible denunciations of God against our sins , and wholly pitch on the comfortable Promises of the Gospel ? Do not we eye Promises, and yet hate Commands ? Do not we mind Temporal Promises, with the neglect of Spiritual, and

and therein disparage God, by setting a deeper value on Earth than on Heaven, on our back and bellies, than on God? Do not we eye the Promises that speak of mercy, but pass over those that lead to duty? View with pleasure pardoning Promises, but neglect the Promises of sprinkling us with clean water, and that Sin shall not have Dominion over us? We like it, that *God will be our God*; but we love not to be *Gods people*, under his command, and at his dispoſe. How do we eye the *absolute Promises*, but neglect the *conditional*? We take hold of Promises of deliverance, when under any misery; but we forget the condition: *If my people shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their evil wayes, &c.* little is that minded by us, which the Prophet speaks, *As*

Jer. 18. what instant I shall speak concerning a Nation,
9, 10. and concerning a Kingdome to build and to plant
it, if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not
my voyce, then I will repent of the good where-
with I said I would benefit them. We love, we like, Promised mercies, and every one is looked upon as an unbelieving *Thomas*, that doubts of the mercy, but we overlook the preparatory duties of Fasting, Praying, Repenting and Reforming our hearts and wayes, &c. Hence men dote almost on the Promises of *grace*; but secretly hate the Promises to *grace*; because they find no gracious qualifications in themselves: they love to hear of Gods readiness to pardon; but they are loth to hear that they must come to Christ for *Repentance* and then for *Remission*; they would fain

fain have the penny, but they cannot endure labour. God hath linked his Promises and our seeking together. *Thus saith the Lord God, I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them:* But how many of us do either altogether neglect, or slothfully go about to perform the condition of the Promise? Are not some of us altogether strangers to faith, the condition of the whole covenant of grace? know not what an heart purifying faith means? We never gave our selves unto the Lord, yet run away with the Promises of forgiveness: though ignorant of the Mediatour betwixt God and sinfull creatures, though full of pride and high conceits of our own Righteousness, though we live in an open disesteem of the Gospel of Christ, though we cannot but find an incomppliance of heart with subjection to Christ, yet we boast *Abraham is our Father, the blessing of Abraham is come upon us, the Promises are ours.* How do the Promises of God make some slothfull in the use of appointed means? How formal in duties are we? May it not be said of us, as of the *Idol* mage, *there is somewhat wanting within?* Are not we *filly doves without heart?* Are not we only bolstered up with the Promises? O! these pillows under our heads make us *slumbering Virgins*: All is well, God is mercifull, &c. but we do not sweat and get our living by labour, we *strive not to enter in at the straight gate, &c.* We look for the blessed hope, but we live not soberly. *I know* (saith God) *the thoughts that I think towards you, thoughts* of

Ezek.
 36. 37.

Deest
aliquid
intus.

Jer. 29. of peace, but not of an evil, to give you an expected end; but be sure, that ye call upon me, and goe and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you.
11, 12.

Nicely
 applying
 them,

10. *How nice and curious are some in applying of Promises?* They forsooth take no pleasure in any Promises, but such as they think no hand touched before their own: They neglect the plain, clear, open, rich Promises of the Gospel; and if any be more abstruse, and hard to be found out, by an ordinary eye, they are greedily suck'd in: They are only or mainly for mystical Promises. Such think they are delighted with the goodness of the Promise, whereas they are only pleased with the newness of it, or with their own invention, and that they can see farther into a Mill-stone than another. I have known some of these, and I have seen what is become of them: their pride and affectation hath led them also from the plain paths of holiness.

Not ap-
 plying
 them, till
 they
 have
 what they
 should
 apply
 them for.

11. *How many will not close with a Promise* (such is their folly) *till the thing promised be found within them?* Because their hearts are so corrupt, therefore they will not apply the Promises of subduing iniquity, and of purifying the heart: whereas there is no way to get their corrupt hearts cleansed, but by laying hold on such Promises; and the longer they keep off the Promise, the worse it will be with them: There is no other way, but by this *Ark*, to escape drowning; and the longer they wander in this *Wilderness*, the more

more hard it will be at last to enter into *Canaan*: the longer they keep off from the promise, the more corrupt will their hearts grow, and the more corrupt they grow, the work of the heart-purifying-faith will be the more difficult.

12. *How many of us eye Providences more* Eyeing
than Promises? and make the *Providences*, Provi-
rather than the *Promises* of God, the *Ground-* dences
of their *Faith*? One saith well, "The *Star-* more than
"light of one single Promise, is of more use Promises.
"to Christians, than a Constellation of many
"Providences, both to assure them in their
"wayes, and to support them under any
"difficulties.

13. *Do not we pretend to eye the Promises,* using in-
and yet *use indirect means to bring our devices to* direct
pass? We have pretended to live the Life of means for
Faith; but God knows what shifts men have getting
had, and wicked (at least questionable) what is
courses men have taken; how much evil hath promised-
been done, that good may come. Have not
we, to help Gods Promises to bring forth,
turned out of Gods way, *resisted Dignities*,
offered Violence to known Laws, wronged
Conscience, forgot all Obligations upon us,
regarded nothing that stood in our way of
compassing our designs? Not look-
ing that

14. *How little do we examine the Fruits of* they at-
Gods Promises in our own Souls? The exceeding tain their
great and precious Promises are given, that our Souls. ends in
we might be partakers of the Divine nature, 2 Pet. 1.
having escaped the corruption that is in the 4.
world through lust: that we might purifie our 1 Jo. 3.
selves, 3.

Their ungodliness.

2 Cor.

7. 1.

selves, even as God is pure : But do we look for these ends to be attained by the Promises in our Souls? Do we look not only for a Change from Looseness to Civility, but a through Sanctification in Body, Mind, and Spirit? Alas ! which of us can say, Having these Promises, we do cleanse our selves from all filthiness of Flesh and Spirit, and are perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

CHAP. XVII.

Their Abuse of Providence.

Professors
Abuse of
Provi-
dence.

10ly. **A** *Buse of Providence is another branch of Ungodliness, too much spreading among Professours. God is to be honoured, not only as the chiefest Good, and as the supreme Truth and Authority; but as the first Cause, that giveth Being to all things, and therefore ordereth and disposeth of all things as he pleaseth, having absolute Dominion over all events: But O ! how is God dishonoured, by abusing his Providence? The blind World are not only guilty, who do not acknowledge God at the other end of Causes, as swaying all things by his Wisdome and Power, but set up an Idol, called Chance; but even Professours, eminent Professours, are herein very guilty.*

1. *How*

1. *How seldome do we observe Gods Providence?* The Finger of God is in all the Creatures; not only *We*, but *all* Creatures *live*, *move*, and *have their being*, from God, and *observing in God*: The whole course of Nature moves, ^{Evidence} ^{ced in} as it is turned by the hand of God, and directed by his counsel: It is not with the work of God, as with the Artificers Clock, which, put into a frame, and hang'd with weights, will goe, though the Artificer be off from it; but though God set all the Creatures in frame, yet the motion of every wheel depends on God. There is not a drop of rain falls, *till God utter his voice*, ^{Jer. 10.} and *cause the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth*: Yet how is God not minded? ^{13.} *We see not his footsteps*: We may say in this, *He passeth this way, and that, and we see him not*. Our eyes are held to secondary Causes: We look when the Wind, or Moon, will change; but we are so short-sighted, that we reach not God. How seldome do we consider, that though Gods Providence doth deliver up his choicest Friends, into the hands of his and their Enemies, yet doth it not deliver them up unto their *will*: they cannot do what *they* please, but only what pleaseth God: Such of Gods own are still *engraven on the palmes of his hands*, though turned over into the hands of the Ungodly: they are Gods Favourites still, though the wicked say, *Persecute them, and take them, for God hath forsaken them*. How little do we mind, that *our times are in Gods hands*; and that as *Satan is in a Chain*, so are his Instruments: We fear

Men more than God. O! when shall we hear that Word of God, *Say not a confederacy*

Isa. 8. to all them to whom this people shall say a confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid: Sanctifie the Lord of Hosts himself, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread: And he shall be for a Sanctuary, &c.

Not being
affected
there-
with,

2. *How little are we affected with the continual course of Providence, though it guards and keeps us every moment?* The Stars in their courses would fight against us: the Sea would swallow us up, and break in as a devourer: the Beasts of the Field would arm against us; if God did not check them, and bound them: yea, one man would eat up another, were it not for the Lord, who sets bounds to the rage of all the Creatures. It is the eye of jealousy that is still wakeful for us: it is the Lord, that *puts the hook into the nose*, and the bridle in the lips, of the Senacheribs of the World; and yet how little are our hearts affected? how little are they comforted, and born up? how little do they cleave unto the Lord?

But dis-
trusting
it.

On the contrary: How distrustful are we of Gods Providence, in a time of seen dangers, though we are wonderfully delivered from invisible ones every day? Who can number the legions of Devils? so many deliverances hast thou by Gods Providence every moment; and yet how dissident and doubtful are we, upon all new imminent outward dangers? How little do we believe, that God will bring in good to us, by such Providences

as are ungrateful to Sense, to Flesh and Blood? Though nothing is more usual, than for God to take away some comforts, and lay in better comforts; to take away an *Abel*, and make it up in *Seth*: to deprive *Noah* of the comforts of the whole World for a while, and then to wash it from its filthiness, and to deliver him the possession of it, with manifest proofs of his singular distinguishing care of him and his Family, whilst all the rest of the Creatures perished in the waters: to deprive *Mary* and *Martha* of their Brother *Lazarus*, and to return him from the dead unto them with great advantage: to deprive *Job* of his Children and Estate, to make his last dayes better than his first, and to give him *twice as much as he had before*; for seven thousand Sheep, he had fourteen thousand; before he had three thousand Camels, afterwards six thousand; before five hundred Asses, then one thousand; yet how little can we trust Providence in such cases? How hardly were the Disciples perswaded, that the absence of their Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, should be supplied in the Spirit? And yet saith Christ, *Nevertheless I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I goe away: for if I goe not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him to you.* Christ in his Spirit, dwelling in our hearts, is better than Christ in Flesh, dwelling in our houses. When the unclean Spirit departs from a man, and returns again, he brings seven Spirits worse than himself, and the latter end of that man is worse than

Job 1.3:
compared with
Ch. 42.
10, 12.

Jo. 16.

7.

Mat.

12. 43.

than his beginning; but when Christ withdrew from Earth to Heaven, he brings seven consolations better than at first, in the pouring forth of the Comforter, and the end of such (in whom the Spirit supplies the want of Christs bodily presence) is better than the beginning. *Why cryest thou for thine affliction? thy sorrow is incurable for the multitude of*

Jer. 30. thine iniquity, &c. Therefore all they that de-
15, 16, vour thee, shall be devoured, &c. for I will re-
17. store health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy

wounds, saith the Lord, because they called thee an outcast, &c. Nothing more usual with God than to make the loss of one comfort, the means of enjoying another with advantage, yea with the advantage of the hundred fold: But alas! most fear they shall be losers by Christ and for Christ. God doth as Mariners, row one way, and look another: he brings most of his great ends about by looking quite aside from what he hath a special intent to bring to pass: the Lord seldome proceeds in a direct way to his ends, *i. e.* in a right way to our apprehensions, in such a way as we would have him go in; but he leads us about, as he did *Israel*, and yet that was the right way indeed: though the means seem to oppose the end; yet he works to the praise of his Name: he can write *right* by a crooked pen, and bring honey out of the *Carkas* of the *Lion*: make use of strange instruments, break down *Jerichos walls* by the sounds of *Rams horns*: But O! how little do we trust Providence when the means are not probable

Psa.

107. 7.

to effect our expected end? Who believes *there shall be light in the Evening*? And that *Sarah shall have a posterity as the Stars in the Firmament for multitude, and as the sand on the Sea shore, which is innumerable*, when she was old, had been barren so long, and her Lord old also? Who will think that *the Sun and the Stars shall bow to Joseph*, when he lies in the Pit, or is in the Dungeon of the Heathen King? How *slow to believe* were the Disciples, when Christ is dead and buried, and lies three dayes in the Grave? *We thought this should have been he that should have delivered Israel.* How little doth *the Worm Jacob* (*Jacob* when reduced as low as the earth, when creeping into holes for security, when as contemptible as a worm, that no man scruples to tread upon, when so easily to be destroyed, as a worm) believe, that yet *the Worm Jacob shall thresh the mountains and fan them, and the wind shall carry them away*? Alas! how unseemly is the behaviour of many, if Providence thwarts them in taking away a Child, an Husband, an Estate, how discouraged and cast down are we, as if God in his Providence had pulled down that, which he could never build again, or rooted up that which he could never plant again. O! how few believe that if God pull down their brick-houses, that he will build them again of hewn-stones, and that if he consume their Fir-trees, he will build again with Cedars? Do not many afflicted Christians think it impossible for their sorrow to be turned into joy?

Zech.

14. 7.

Hebr.

11. 12.

Luk. 24.

21, 25.

Isa. 41.

15, 16.

17.

Hence de- Whence is all our dejectedness under Cross-
 jectedness Providences, but from our not believing
 under that all things are disposed by the wise and
 Cross- gracious Providence of God? We believe
 Providen- not enough that *the Eyes of our loving Father*
 ces, *run to and fro throughout the Earth, to shew*

*himself Marvellous for our help in a time of
 need and danger. David was thus overtaken,
 till he school'd himself into a better
 frame, with Why art thou cast down, O my*

*Psa. 42. Soul, and why art thou disquieted in me? Hope
 5. thou in God, for I shall yet praise him for the
 help of his countenance. Few can say, God is*

*Psa. 46. our refuge and strength: a very present help in
 I, 2. trouble. Therefore will we not fear, though the*

*Earth be removed: and though the Mountains
 be carried into the midst of the Sea. Few be-
 lieve that if the Lord be pleased to lay a great
 burden upon their shoulders, he will give
 great strength to bear it, and if he gives but
 little strength, he will surely proportion the
 burden to it. Whence are all our uproars of
 Spirit, and disquietness of heart, but from
 our not trusting upon Providence? When
 God is working desolation, did we see it his
 work, we would be still. David was so,
 when strangely provoked by Shimei's insolency
 and railings. God hath bid Shimei curse.
 Abisha was not so much concerned in the
 affront, as David, but he sees not God in
 the lips of Shimei, and therefore his Spirit
 is inflamed.*

Boylings
 of re-
 venge,

All the boylings of Revenge that are in
 the hearts of men one 'gainst another may be
 attributed

attributed to mans blindness and injudicious view of things, they see not the wicked to be *Gods Sword* to let out their corruption: they do not believe that God intends to pursue gracious designs by such instruments. *Joseph* was easily conquered and perswaded to forgive the unkindness, yea the cruelty of his Brethren in making Merchandize of him to the *Ishmalites*, he could say, *It was not you that sent me hither, but God, &c. As for you, ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass as it is this day, to save much people alive.* He insinuates to them, that they had no cause to fear his revenging himself on them; for that he could easily pardon that offence of theirs, out of which God hath drawn so much good to his people, and so much glory to his own Name. How silent would we be, yea how full of praises, if by an eye of faith we did see the end of God in all his Providences, that they lead to holiness: *Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now I keep thy Word: I know O Lord, that thy judgements are right, and that thou hast afflicted me in faithfulness.* He for our Profit, *that we might be partakers of his holiness.* Can we fume at the Physician for prescribing a dyet, or bitter pills and potions, if he provides these for the purging away diseases, that threaten our ruine? Shall we fly in the face of him that binds us, in order to the Saving us? and yet what murmurings have we, whilst in the hands of the Physician? *The folly of a man perverteth his wayes, and his*

*Gen. 45.
8. 50.
20.*

*Psa. 119. 67.
75.*

Hebr. 12. 10.

The Prov. 19. 3.

Their ungodliness.

heart fretteth against the Lord. How should we honour God, if we did believe, that in *his hand our breath is?*

And care-
lessness to
please
God.
Dan. 5.
23.
How carefull are we to please them that have power over our lives, and to whom we are beholding for every breath we breath? O! study how much you labour to comply with men, and how little with the Lord, and you will find your distrust of Providence, that you do not believe, that *God sitteth upon the floods.*

Justifying
their acti-
ons and
states by
Provi-
dence.
3. *How oft have we made Providence an argument to justify our actions and states?* That, because God doth not punish us, but tolerate us, therefore he loves us, and approves of our way? Whereas the Scriptures and Experience shew, that *there is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that prolongs his life in wickedness:* The Lord sometimes puts his *Hoggs* into the fattest pastures, in order to the *Slaughter*; yea, sometimes his not punishing, is the greatest punishment. *I will not punish your Daughters for their Whoredomes:* God lets Adulterers and Adulteresses to prosper and thrive. *Hierome* observes, that God deals with us, as *Parents* with *Children*, whilst there is any hope of reclaiming them, they are corrected; but otherwise they are let alone, to do as they list: Or as *Physicians* continue their applications, whilst there is any hope of the *Patients* life; otherwise they let them alone. How do some bless themselves, that they never fasted and prayed as others, and

Hos. 4.
14.

*Va illi
ad quo-
rum pec-
cata con-
nivet
Deus.
Luth.*

and yet they ride on horseback, whilst others
 foot it out : But what saith *Hierome* to these ?
Quando videris, &c. "When thou seest a
 " sinner flow with wealth, and braving of
 " his power : when thou seest him very
 " healthful, and to have a company of brave
 " Children bravely arrayed ; then say, the
 " threatening of God, by the Prophet *Hoseah*,
 " is fulfilled upon that man. *Dives had his*
good things here, and Lazarus evil : *Dives fa-*
red deliciously every day, his misery is reser-
 ved to hereafter, as *Lazarus* his comforts are
 reserved till death. *Mark the perfect man*, *Psal. 37.*
and behold the upright, for the end of that man
is peace. i. e. a confluence of all good.
 What said one of the late *English Bishops* ?
 " It is the common lot of the true Children
 " of God, because they have many out-fly-
 " ings, wherewith their holy Father is not
 " well pleased, to come under the scourge
 " oftner than the Bastards do. If they do a-
 " miss, they must smart for it either here or
 " hereafter : now God meaneth them *no con-*
 " *demnation* hereafter, and therefore he giv-
 " eth them more *chastning* here. It is a con- *I Cor.*
 siderable passage of a very learned man, in *II. 32.*
 weakning the late position of some, that
God had borne Testimony to their cause, by the
many Victories which he had given them, saith
 he, " This concluding of yours will by the
 " same reason infer that *Christianity* is not ;
 " and that *Mahumetisme* is the true Religion ;
 " because when the *Turks* asserted one, and
 " the *Greek-Church* the other, and that dif-
 ference

- "ference begat a War betwixt them ; it is
 "clear that the *Turks* were successful, and
 "the *Greek-Church* was sadly wasted and
 "subdued by them, and so remains to this
 "hour in that un-retained Captivity. *Doe*
Eccles. 9. not all things come alike to all ? And yet good
 2. men, some of the best that ever breathed,
 have been stumbled at these dispensations :
Jer. 21. "Lord (saith the Prophet *Jeremiah*) thou
 1. "art righteous, yet let me reason with thee,
 "Why doth the way of the Wicked prosper ?
 "Thou art of purer Eyes (saith the Prophet
Hab. 1. "*Habakkuk*) than to behold evil, and canst
 13. "not look on iniquity : Wherefore lookest
 "thou upon them that deal treacherously, and
 "holdest thy tongue, when the Wicked de-
 "voureth the man that is more righteous than
 "he ? The Saints also of the New Testa-
 ment were apt to stumble at the Cross, at
 Gods Providences towards his Saints and fa-
 vourites, that they should suffer such hard
 things : so that the Apostles were forced to
 counsel them, and to rectifie their thoughts,
 in this particular ; *My Brethren think it not*
 1 *Pet. 4.* strange concerning the fiery tryal : And the A-
 12. postle *Paul* sent *Timothy* on purpose to com-
 1 *Thes.* fort them, and to establish them, that no
 3. 3. 4. man should be moved by these afflictions : Yea
 our Lord himself knowing how apt his Disci-
 ples were to stumble hereat, preacheth on
 purpose on this subject. *These things have I*
spoken unto you, that ye be not offended : What
things were these ? They shall put you out of
the Synagogues (excommunicate you, cast
 you

you out like dogs:) *Yea the time shall come, that whosoever killeth you will think he doth God service.* Good men, when they see the wicked thus *walk on every side* (go where they please, and do what they please) they are apt, either to *doubt* of Gods Providence, *Whether he governs the World*, or to call in question whether they have any relation to Gods special care. But do not we know that the Child is oft beaten, whilst the Servant or stranger is spared? Doe not we know that judgement begins at the House of God, yea, and stays long there, and all that while the tents of ungodliness may be free: these may wash ^{1 Pet. 4.} their steps in butter, and the Rocks may pour them out Rivers of Oyle: they may wax old and grow in wealth; their seed may be establi- ^{17.} shed: the Rod of God may not be upon them: 7 ad 15. they may rejoyce in in the sound of the Organ, &c. and yet wicked enough: All this they may have with the Curse of God, for they say unto God depart, &c.

4. How oft have the generation of the Just been censured for Hypocrites and ungodly, meer- ^{Censuring others and} ly because of outward Providences? Thus was Job themselves censured by good men; because he sate on the Dunghil, who was wont to sit with Princes. ^{upon the account of outward Pro-} Let a man be under grievous losses by Sea, or by Land, yea let but a Viper hang upon the hand, and what then? This man (say they) surely is a murtherer, who though he hath es- ^{Acts 28.} caped the Seas, yet vengeance suffereth not to 4. live: Mens outward conditions is made by Barbarians, yea by Christians, the line to mea-

measure Mens relation to God by, they interpret love by prosperity, and hatred by adversity: whereas the Lord tells us that *through many tribulations we must enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*. I wonder not at this, when I consider, that *the Servant is not above the*

Isa. 53. Master: When Christ was a man of sorrows,
 3, 4. *they did judge him smitten of God.* How ready also are we to say this is a just Judgement of God upon such a suffering Professour, for-----? Yea we censure our selves for Hypocrites, when God crosseth us in some earthly comforts, and designs. If a Child dies, &c. then we question the root of the matter, whether there be a spark of grace.

Making
 Providence
 an hindrance to
 depending on
 God.

5. *The more Providence hath favoured us, have not we the less roled our selves on the Covenant of grace? Hath not God had the less of our dependance and faith? Have not the promises lain more neglected, so that God hath been even necessitated to draw in his hand of bounty, that, like the Widdow, when destitute, we may trust to him? The Cisterns leak apace, that the Fountain may be in greater request.*

Being discontented with
 Providence.

6. *How discontented are we to this day with Gods Providential administrations toward us? How do we prescribe to God? Some would be richer than they are; others more honourable: Some covet to be above others. We have bad memories, or else we cannot but remember how ill some of us improved our talents of power and honour, when we had them. Is it reasonable that God should be charged*

charged for an hard Matter for not entrusting ten talents in our hands, when we have been so unfaithfull to our former allotments? *Fesurun-like* we waxed fat, and never were more *beast-like*, than when we were in the *greenest* pastures. God would be charg'd even with indiscretion, if he should commit ten talents again to thee, till thou art humbled for thy former unfaithfulness.

7. *How do we take Gods work out of his hands?* Taking
How carefull are we in many things, though Gods
we should be carefull in nothing? Though we work out
cannot add one Cubit to our Stature by all our of his
cares; yet what sollicitudes eat into our hands.
hearts, and cut them in twain? We should
serve Providence in the use of means, but should
have nothing to do with the issues and events of
the means we use, but leave them to God.
That which is not under our *Power*, should not
be under our *Care*. All things are ordered by
the deliberate Counsel of God. *I returned, Eccles.]*
and saw under the Sun, that the race is not to the 9. II.
swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet
bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of under-
standing, nor yet favour to men of skill, but
time and chance happeneth to them all.

8. *How do rotten-hearted Hypocrites distast* Distasting
God, grow careless of serving God, yea fall in-Religious
to an abhorrence of Religion because of Gods because of
frowning upon his people in *Providential dispensations*? Hence innumerable sorts of these
hollow-hearted Professours, desert their former Profession: when the Wind and Tide of
Preferment is against them, they will not ha-
zard

Their ungodliness.

zard their outward comforts, for all the Promises of the Gospel: whilst they see how little Providence favours the Saints as to the comforts of this life, and that Providence suits not their desires, they rage and swell, and are ready to cry out, like that wretched

2 Kings King, *This evil is of the Lord, wherefore*
6. 33. *should I wait on the Lord any longer? Now Farewell to God, Farewell to Profession: if when the Children ask bread, he gives them stones, Farewell to such a Father.*

Neglect-
ing Pro-
vidence,
and shift-
ing for
them-
selves,

9. *How commonly do men neglect the Providence of God, and betake themselves to their own shifts to extricate themselves from their miseries? Is man wiser than God? And yet men hope rather to help themselves by their own wits, wiles, and endeavours, than by leaning to the Providence of God. Such there were in Jeremiahs time: God had told them that he had brought them into Straights on purpose to engage them to repent of their sins, and to turn to the Lord: Thus saith the Lord, behold I frame evil against you, and devise a device against you: return ye now every one from his evil way, and make your wayes and doings good; But they loved not humbling work; And they said there is no hope, but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his own evil heart: They had devices of their own, such as God approved not: And have not we (some of us) had such? Hath there not been devising how to sow discords between superiours and inferiours, betwixt Magistrate and*
peo-

people? Hath their not been *stumbling in our ways from the ancient paths in a way not cast up*, v. 15. in an untrodden way? O! how have men run to extraordinary courses to deliver themselves out of their miseries? For this, God may *make our land desolate and a perpetual hissing*, or derision: he may justly scatter us *as with an East wind before the Enemy*, and shew v. 16. us the back and not the face in the day of our calamity. v. 17.

10. *Have not we been partial in viewing the Being Providences of God?* Have not we taken some partial in one Providence, and fixed our eye upon it viewing Providence so long, till our hearts have been ever overwhelmed with sorrow? But we have not viewed the Providences of God in their contexture, nor in their relation to gracious ends for our good: some take more notice of smiling Providences than of frowning, of what in Providence makes for them, and their courses, than of what makes against them: but others take more notice of frowning Providences than of smiling, of what makes against them, than of what makes for them. In this we have shewn our selves fools; for *who is wise shall understand these things*: These Hos. 14. words are restrictive: Who? That is few or none are such, and then there is an earnest wish or desire of the Prophet, O that men were wise to understand these things: *the wayes of the Lord are right*, though men think them not so.



CHAP. XVIII.

Their Hypocrisie.

Professors
Hypocrisy

Hypocrisie is another piece of Ungodliness, which like leaven, hath diffused it self through the whole body of Professors. It is the greatest ungodliness, that can be, to rob the Lord of his dominion over the Conscience, and therefore Hypocrisie is called Blasphemy. I know the blasphemy of

Rev. 2. 9.

them that say they are Jews, and are not. God is not honoured unless he be acknowledged as the *supream Authority*, not only over the life, but the heart; and therefore his Authority is never more undetermined than by a meer form

2 Tim.

3. 5.

of godliness. Hypocrites are clouds without rain, wells without water, trees without fruit, though not without leaves: Yea (to use Christs similitude) they are garnished tombs: they appear

Abcondit
quod est,
quod non
est menti-
tur.

Bern.

to be one thing, but are another thing: they appear to be the greatest Worshippers of God; but are the greatest dishonourers of God: They profess that they know (worship) God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and dis-obedient, and to every good

Tit. 1. 16

work reprobate. The Hypocrites piety is not piety, his religion is not religion; but doubled

bled and trebled iniquity. Should not this make us to tremble at the greatness of the hypocrisy of this age? O! How many *Apothecaries-boxes* are there, that have *golden titles* and *nothing* in them? How many curious *pictures* drawn to life; but look behind them, and there is nothing but dust and cobweb? How many have glorious *signs*, but within ill customs: an *Angel* for a sign, a *Lamb* for a sign; but within are *Devils* and *Cheats*?

Quis non irascatur videns homines; ore Deum confitentes, negantes moribus? Seculum verbis, et non factis renunciantes?

How many have taken up Religion under pretence of its being an help to Heaven, when they have made it a means to get earth, to get custom, credit, &c. Hence when they cannot compass, but rather obstruct their worldly designs, Farewell to Religion: if it contribute not to their private ends; they give it up again. O! How few have embraced Christ and Truth, for Christ's sake, for Truth's sake? Have not most embraced Christ and his Gospel, as they have Servants, for what they can do for them? and adhered to Profession as the Ivy to the Tree, not because it loves it, but sucks from it, and is succoured by it? Have they not alwayes worshipped the rising, and not the declining Sun? How few own the declining sinking cause of Christ? How hard is it to perswade men to stand for truths, that stand not with their advancements and accommodations? Hence many now stand idle, as the people in the Market place, who would not go into the Vineyard, till they were hired. How few will own any way to

be Christs, till they see how it stands with their secular advantages? How many New-
 ters now, who once were forward Profess-
 fours? *If we entertain him (saith they) the Romans will come, and take away our place and Nation.* We find the truth of a learned mans
 Assertion: *He that will serve God for the world, will serve the Devil for the world: He that serves God for a little, will serve the Devil for more: where he can mend his wages, he will give his service.* How many Professours have with *Absolon* gone to *Hebron* to worship, but all the while have promoted their own ambi-
 tious designs, raising even sedition in order to their earthly advantages?

Speaking
 to God.

In how many hath the tongue prayed
 when not the heart? These have been much
 in fasting and prayer, and have thought them-
 selves much wronged that they were not
 heard: but God gives them a reason: *Ye shall*
Isa. 58. *not fast as ye do to make your voice to be heard*
4. *on high.* The Hypocrite may lift up his voice
 strongly, and yet never be heard: his voice
 for want of the heart therein may never come
 up to Gods dwelling place: his Prayers ma-
 ny times fall back upon his own face, like
 spittle against the wind. How many have
 used Prayer as an *hook* to draw in outward
 from God and Man; but not as a *sword* to de-
 stroy their lusts? How many have cryed ve-
 hemently unto God for assistances in their du-
 ties, chiefly, if not solely, to get themselves
 a Name in the Earth? How many tell God
 with a brazen face that they love him; yet
 that

that they love him with all their hearts ; whereas they love not God, but God's, somewhat of God : they flatter God with their lips : they delight not in his presence : yea all the while they are serving their turn on God? Fain they would partake of Gods bounty, of Gods protection, and Gods pardons, but they love neither God nor his Image : when God puts them to express their love by self-denyal, then you shall see the graves to be full of rottenness : they hate to spend and to be spent for God. How many tell God that they are troubled for offending him, when they are only troubled that he is displeasing them, and about to correct them for their abuses of him? They will cry out in Prayer, O my carelesness! &c. But alas! It is not Sin, but the Judgements of God, and the consequents of Sin that disturb them. How many will tell God twenty times over they are ashamed of their Sins, and within one hour after they are not ashamed to commit them again, no more ashamed are they, than the Sow is to lye tumbling in the Mire? How will many tell God they fear him, and his Judgements, when indeed and intruth they fear neither, witness their frothy loose spirits and conversations? How will they tell God that all the world is but as a drop of a bucket in comparison of his Majesty, and that all flesh is contemptible, when weighed with him, and yet they fear the wrath of Man more than the wrath of the Almighty God? How many will tell God that they are contented

Their ungodliness:

with all his will, and yet their hearts are full of inward risings against the Providence of God? How many tell God they believe in him, trust to his Mercy, depend on Christ, and O! forsooth all their cares are cast on Christ, when God knows, their care and work, like Bees, is to get honey to their hives? They *mind earthly things*, and are scraping the dust of the Valleys to themselves, as if they thought it their wisdom rather to lean to their own providing, than to be beholding to the Lord and dye beggars? How earnest are some in their cries to God for victory over Sin; but secretly hate it not? And doth it not appear in this, for that having directed their Prayers to the Lord, they do not look up, to see whether the corruption be more mortified, and their love to it abated yea or no?

To men,
concern-
ing
things.

How have the speeches of many in their converse one with another bewrayed their hypocrisie? How do many covet mightily to insist on the refinements of hypocrites, and thereby they escape (as they hope at least) from being judged such themselves? How have some studied to disgrace Sin to the utmost, and yet secretly cherished that, which they laboured to make odious to others? In company they cry down self-love, hypocrisie, formality, earthyness, and pride, but privately they keep up these, and make them their companions. How Zealous have some been in discourse for the Protestant Faith? How have they cryed out against errors, and for

a reformation ; but can tell no more of a work of God upon the heart than an Heathen? How have some contended for opinions, and have put a *jus divinum* upon such and such a way, and counted others as little better than Pagans, that would not submit to their way, and yet by fear and flattery have soon faced about.

How will some cry up such and such for ^{Persons} most eminent in grace? and O how doe they ^{Others,} love them! when all the while self-love acts them, and if they gain not by them, they will surely have an howbeit to blot them? They are as the foreman to praise the rich, from whom they hope to squeeze some of their gold; but bring up the rear, are the last to commend them, from whom they expect nothing of advantage by their glavering tongue. How much Hypocrisie hath appeared in our declaimings against others sins? O! we must not suffer this: the House of God must be kept clean: it must not be made a Den of Thieves, an Hog-sty, and cage of uncleanness: and all this while their zeal is nothing but revenge; a secret grudge there is against the Delinquent, and now that an advantage offereth, they will have their pennyworth out of him.

How many are always finding faults, blaming ^{Them-} Magistrates, Ministers, all but themselves, ^{selves,} This man wants courage, and another wants another grace, whilst they themselves want all grace, as being meer pieces of pageantry. How many whining Hypocrites

have we, that will in all companies, especially where Ministers are, be crying out against the baseness and treachery of their own hearts, and the wickedness of their own lives, and rest in their lazy complaints, but reform not?

Censuring.

Mat. 7.
3:

How severe are some in their censures of sin in others, as *Judah* against *Thamar*, she must be burnt? who will now suspect *Judah* to be unclean? How ready have we been to judge and censure others, rather than our selves? To behold a *mote* in others, but not the *beam* in our selves? How many censure Ministers for too seldome preaching in private, and yet are themselves Sermon-glutted, as yet they have not got a stomach, so great was their surfeit with the former plenty; yea, when they have Sermons, neglect them; or if they attend with their Bodies on them, yet have no fellowship with Christ in them? We are just like Consumption people, apt to be angry, and fret, if we have not our wonted meals, and the Cooks are blamed for negligence; and when the meat is brought before us, we are even weary of the smell of it. How many censure others for being to talkative, and therefore would impose silence upon others, because they have neither heart nor tongue, to vindicate God, and to promote Religion?

Acting,
better a-
broad
than at
home, in
publick
than in
seeret du-
ties,

How many are full of perswasions of the love of God, and of the grace of God, and yet ignorant of the first Principles of Christianity; neglecters of Family-Prayer, or Clo-

set-

set-Duties? They think well of themselves, because in their Duties before men they are devout and zealous, and carried forth to the wasting of much time; but in their Closets they are straightned, and put the Lord off with a short Collect. How many, like your City Maids, goe in their best, are neat, cleanly, and in gorgeous apparel, when walking in the views of others; but if you follow them home to their houses and chambers, how nasty, how foul are they! How many are there whose Religion lies in their face, habit, gesture: seem demure, humble; walk with their eyes looking downwards, bow with *Absolon* to the people, and yet their hearts full of pride and loftiness? How oft even on Fast-dayes have you had sour faces, and inwardly light, frothy, and unserious hearts? As an evidence observe when the day ends, *the Dog returns to his vomit*, the heart becomes vain, or rather, the vanity that was smothered and pent up in the day breaks out as soon as the duties are over: We can hang down our heads like a bull-rush, we can rough cast our faces, but it is hardly for a day.

How hath Hypocrisie followed thee from the corners of the streets to the very closet? Thou hast shut thy door, as if thou wouldst shut out World and Devils, and there hast fall'n asleep, or (which is as bad) hast parlied with the Devil, and pampered thy lusts: Hypocrisie, like the Frogs of *Egypt*, hath crept into thy most secret retirements.

Seeming
to be
more in
secret du-
ties than
they are.

Being not
univer-
sally obe-
dient.

Psal.

119. 6.

How few can pretend to *Uniformity* in their obedience? How many will be *ashamed*, because they *respect* not *all Gods Commandments*? Still they elip the Law: Still some reserves: they will let go profaneness, so they may but reserve covetousness: they will pray, hear, &c. so they may cheat their Neighbour under a demure behaviour: or they will be strict to rules of Justice and equity among men: but they will rob God of his honour: some of them are punctual to a day, to a farthing (Blush, Reader, if thou art short of the Hypocrites stature) they will not cheat you with a brasse Shilling; but rob God of his due, of his due in the Closet, and in the Family too.

Desiring
to know
the least
degree of
saving
grace.

How frequently do we hear some desiring to know the least measure of saving Grace, and why? because they would sit down therewith. There is not a surer note of an unsound heart, than to be contented with the least degree of grace, and not to press forward.

But not
to be ex-
amined,
nor to
consult
with Mini-
sters a-
bout their
condition,
much less
to follow
their di-
rections.

How generally do men hate to be examined and tried about their state? This is a sure sign of a rotten heart, of a painted-Christian; paint will not endure the fire: Hypocrites hate lancing and piercing work. How many continue in a course of Religion, and yet their hearts are hardned more and more, and they know it, and yet will hardly consult with Ministers about their sad condition? or if they do, yet practise nothing more than before? I am confident there are many who make

make it their business to keep up their reputation among the Saints, but have lost (and know they have) their credit at the throne of grace; and though they have their reward, the Saints embrace them for Precious, yet Christ neglects them, and when they spread out their hands all the day long to the Heavens, they have no welcome with God. *To what purpose is the multitude of your Sacrifices* *Isa. 1.*
unto me, saith the Lord, I am full of the burnt *II.*
offerings of the Rams, and the fat of fed beasts,
and I delight not in the blood of Bullocks, or of
Lambs, or of He-goats. And when you
spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes *v. 15.*
from you: yea when you make many Prayers, I
will not hear.

O! What a Controversie hath God with *Confide-*
 England for its great Hypocrisie? We have *rations a-*
 called our selves of the Holy City, and have *gainst*
 made mention of the God of Israel, but not in *hypocrisie*
 truth, not in righteousness. Though you have *Isa. 48.*
 past for Saints in the account of blind, and *1, 2.*
 short-sighted men; yet you are but Devils in
 Christs account: So was the arch-Hypocrite
 Judas, *One of you is a Devil.* Of all Devils
 none so bad as the Professing Devil. Re-
 member the vengeance which fell on *Bel-*
 shazzar, when he carouzed in the Bowls of
 the Sanctuary. *Their damnation slumbereth* *2 Pet. 2.*
 not, who through covetousness make use of *3.*
 the covering of fained words. O! When
 will ye put on the new man, which after God is
 created in righteousness, and True holiness? *Eph. 4.*
 Believe it, if thou art a whited wall God will *24.*
 smite

smile thee. Though thou get some present glory or profit by thy outlidge holiness, yet God more abhors thee, than the bleer and imperfect observing World can applaud thee. Will a King indure it, that thou take his Robes, and cloath a Swine with them? or that thou take his Crown and set it on the head of a base Varlet? *God is coming against the Hypocritical Nation.* And he accounts it a disgrace, for thee to voice thy self to be the Son of so great a Prince, whilst thou art a Slave to Hellish lusts. All you do for God will not profit you, *you lose all you have wrought*, whilst acted by self, and corrupt in your ends and aims. Though you trust in *lying words*, in your outward shews, yet *I will declare thy righteousness, and thy words, for they shall not profit thee.* What shall I say? There is no acceptance for you to be had without the *Benjamin* of sincerity with you. A day of trouble is hastning, and you think then to pray, *but will God hear your cry when trouble cometh upon you?* If you deny God your heart, never expect his ear. *Quails* you may have, but with a *vengeance*, with *leanness in your souls.* That which God desireth and looketh for, is *truth in the inward parts.* God and Religion have received so much dishonour by pretenders to Christ and Truth, and so many Atheists have been made, confirmed, and hardned in *England*, by the Observations they have made on Professours hypocritical pretensions, that I fear the stains will hardly be wash'd away without blood, and

Jer. 7.
8.

Isa. 57.
12.

Job. 27.
9.

Psal.

106.15.

Psal. 51.

6.

and some probably will be called forth to seal to the Truth of Christ by their death, to convince men, that there are some real Christians, who will spend, and be spent for Christ; and that whilst many have but a *Name to live*, yet there are a few in our *Sardis*, who are not defiled with hellish Hypocrisie, but love Truth in their inward parts.

CHAP. XIX.

Their Sabbath-Sins.

Lastly, **W**hen you remember the evil Professors of your wayes, of your un-godly wayes, you may not omit your Sabbath-Sins.

God hath appointed the Sabbath: He hath sanctified it for special and entire communion with himself. The Law of the Sabbath was given before the Fall; because man was to labour and dress the Garden on the six dayes, and therefore could not have that compleat and indistracted communion with God, even in his estate of innocency, which he might enjoy by a total seperation from all earthly and heterogeneous employments: But since the Fall, this Rest is of more absolute necessity; for that we cannot now apply our minds

en-

entirely to matters of so different a nature, as heavenly and earthly things are. The Sabbath is many wayes honourable : it was anti-
 ently set apart by God ; it was written with Gods own finger in the Tables ; God rained
 Mannah on that day ; it's called an *Everlast-
 ing Covenant* , by way of eminency , as if no-
 thing of Gods Covenant were kept , if this
 were not : Yea , God puts a *Remember* on
 this day , and no other : *Remember that thou
 keep holy the Sabbath day.* “ If a Friend send-
 “ eth to you , that he will come and solace
 “ himself in your company such a day , and
 “ tells you the set time , when he will come ;
 “ will he not take it ill , if you neglect him
 “ then ? If you are full of employments , and
 “ other guests , and have no leisure to attend
 “ communion with him ? Thus saith God ,
 “ Remember such a time , I will set it apart
 “ on purpose to enjoy you , and feast you ; I
 “ will then take you into my Cellars , my
 “ Wine-Cellars , and (after an holy manner)
 “ inebriate you with Divine comforts : You
 “ are on your other dayes clogg'd and cum-
 “ bred with earthly affairs , so that I can have
 “ therein but broken communion with you ;
 “ but pray *Remember* to lay aside all other bu-
 “ siness , to rest from all your other works ,
 “ that I and you may freely converse together.
 But instead of this ,

Their not
 preparing
 for it,

How little *Preparation* do we make for the
 observing of this day unto the Lord ; Though
Remember be a Watch-word of solemn Prepa-
 ration for it ? *Remember it* , think of it be-
 fore

fore it come, that so thou mayest be ready to sanctifie it, without any distraction by worldly business. Which of us dispatcheth his worldly business seasonably on the six dayes? Nay, is it not a wicked custome, to engross more business into our hands and hearts the day before, than on any other day of the Week? Do not greedy Professors sit up later on *Saturday* Night, than any other Night? Hereby their hearts are cumbred with the World, and their natural strength and spirits wasted and spent, so that they cannot with a *free Spirit* wait upon God. Such is the reverence that is due to the solemn and publick Duties of Devotion, that they require, not only a surcease from other works and thoughts, for the time of the performance; but also a decent preparation before-hand, that we *look to our feet*, &c. that so our thoughts and affections, which are naturally bent upon the World, and not easily withdrawn from it, may be raised to a disposition becoming the day. God alone knows, how oft the Devil, and our own hearts, have intangled us with occasions on the *Saturday*, whereby our minds have been distracted on the Sabbath: Yea, have we not at times even secretly wished, that the Sabbath were over, or might be adjourned, that we might pursue some worldly design, which is obstructed by its interposel? The Sabbath is the Saints *Market-day*, or *Fair-day*: You know what preparations are made by Worldlings for their dayes of gain; would to God we

Their ungodlineſſe.

we had learned wiſdome from carnal men, ſo to fit and prepare for the advantages to our Souls we may reap upon Gods day.

Their
curtailing
it.

Amos 8.
4.

How have we curtailed the Sabbath? Have not we riſen later on the Lords day than on any other? and gone ſooner to bed on that day than on any other? *When will the Sabbath be gone?* Do not we make it the ſhorteſt day of the Week? O! If God had reſerved all the dayes to himſelf ſave one, how diligent would you have been, to take all the day to your worldly buſineſſ? This is a clear evidence, that your minds are more on your Profits and Pleaſures, than on the Service of Chriſt.

Being ſad
when the
Sabbath
begins,
and glad
when it
ends.

How lowring are our countenances, and how lumpiſh and heavy are our hearts, in the beginning of a Sabbath, much more than upon any other day? Doth not this prove the day to be no way pleaſing to us? And how chearfull are ſome of us, when the Sabbath is ended? The heart is not ſo well pleaſed all the day, as then: yea do not ſome cheat and delude themſelves hereby, as if they had joy in the Lord, and had received comfort from the Word and other Ordinances; whereas they are glad that the yoke of Ordinances, the burden of the Word of the Lord, and the burden of the day of the Lord is taking off their Shoulders?

Being
hindered
from pro-
faneing it
only by
external
motives.

How many are there, who would profane Gods Sabbaths and wholly neglect the Ordinances of them, were it not for the Laws of men, and the eyes of their Relations? How

How quieted are some when they have attended the publick service? and do they bewixt and after those solemn duties refrain their lips from worldly talk, from impertinencies, from such discourse, as bears no proportion with the holiness of the day?

When works of Necessity and Charity happen out beyond our expectation or forecast, are we (at all) troubled at them? Do not we rather rejoyce, because we have thereby a dispensation to withdraw from the immediate worship of God? And how many neglect

to do all their works on the six dayes, though the Lord so expressely chargeth them so to do, that they may have a pretence of necessity to do much servile work on the Sabbath? How common is it to dress meat on the Sabbath, more than on any other day, when there is not the least presence of weaknes, &c. Hereby not only Servants, but the whole house are too much in labour and distraction, and hindred (if not from the solemn Assemblies, yet) from Family, and Closet worship.

Exad. 20. 9.

How do many gossip, complement, and feast away (abroad) the day of the Lord? or else eat to an excess at home, and thereby make themselves fitter for a bed, than to wait on the Sanctuary, to hear Christs voice, to meditate on his love, and to feed in his pleasant pastures?

Eating too much on the Sabbath.

How carefull are we to keep our selves, and ours, from puffering from our Neighbour? but not from stealing from God his time? yea are not some Governours so un-

Stealing Gods time.

godly

Their ungodliness.

godly, unmercifull, that they will allow their people no time but the Sabbath to recreate themselves from their labours? If they need recreation, you have more time than God hath reserved; sure you should not steal from God to pleasure them.

Not performing duties of mercy aright.

In the discharge of the works of mercy to Man and Beast, Do not we respect more our own commodity, than the will of God, than the dispensation of God; and the creatures necessities? Are these works of mercy attended with such spiritual meditations, as they do afford us, if our hearts were holy?

Not blessing of God for the Sabbath.

How few bless God for giving them one day, wherein they may lighten their hearts of all worldly cares, and throw off all griefs and secular cumbers, and may seek for relief and comfort in their God?

Careless whether those under them observe the Sabbath.

Perhaps the Master observes a day unto the Lord; but how careless is he, that his Sons and Daughters, and all within his gate honour the day of the Lord? Do not many Professing Governours of Families let them sleep away the Sabbath, that they may be the fitter for their drudgeries the following week? O! when will Governours be as diligent, that their Servants and Household serve the Lord, as that they serve themselves? You have been carefull that your work were done on the week; but careless whether Gods work were done by them on the Sabbath: careless whether your Servants profited by the Sabbath yea or no? When will Gods glory and the good of your peoples Souls be nearer to you than your

your worldly advantages? You ask your Servants, what work they have done for you every day, and call them to frequent accounts for your gains sake, and what? never reckon with them about their Spiritual Soul-work? O! how little is the love of God shed abroad in your hearts?

How justly may God be angry with us, till he hath consumed us, for our defiling the day of the Lord? It was Gods expresse Law, that *every one that defileth it should surely be put to death.* *Exod. 31. 14.* When the people were weary of the Sabbath, when they said, *When will the new Moon be gone that we may sell corn? and the Sabbath that we may set forth wheat, &c.* *Amos 8. 5.* The Lord *v. 7.* swore by the excellency of Jacob, Surely I will never forget any of their works. Shall not the *v. 8.* land tremble for this, and every one mourn that dwelleth therein? and it shall rise up wholly as a flood, and it shall be cast out and drowned, as by the flood of Egypt. And it shall come to pass *v. 9.* in that day, saith the Lord God, that I will cause the Sun to go down at Noon, and I will darken the Earth in the clear day. And I will *v. 10.* turn your Feasts into mourning, and all your Songs into lamentation, &c. Behold the dayes *v. 11.* come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a Famine in the land, not a Famine of Bread, nor a thirst for Water, but of hearing the Word of the Lord. And they shall wander from Sea *v. 12.* to Sea, and from the North even to the East, they shall run to and fro to seek the Word of the Lord, and shall not find it.



CHAP. XX.

Their miscarriages about Heart-examination.

Professors
miscarria-
ges about
Self-exa-
mination.

2 Cor.
13. 5.

Deut. 4.
39.

THe more that the Lord of Heaven chargeth us with a Duty, the more inexcusable are our neglects of it : There are few things more com-
manded us, than to try and examine our hearts and lives : *Examine your selves*, &c. *Prove your selves*, &c. We are apt to be strangers to our selves, to cheat our selves with vain presumptuous hopes, to rest in notions ; therefore *ιαυλὺς παραζητεῖ*, *Examine your selves*, take an *experimental* knowledge of your selves : We are apt to prove others, and censure them ; therefore *ιαυλὺς δοκιμάζει*, *Prove your own selves*, begin at home, try your state, try your actions, bring the *mettal* to the *touchstone*, see whether it be *sound* or *counterfeit* ; try your *Faith*, whether it be *temporary* or *saving* ; prove your *Repentance*, whether it be *through* or *superficial* ; examine your *Love*, whether it be *sincere* or *hypocritical* ; and your *Obedience*, whether it be *universal* or *partial*. *Know therefore, and consider it in thine heart, make a return or answer*

to thine heart. *Commune with thine own heart,* Psa. 4. 4
hold intelligence with it. *Let a man examine* 1 Cor.
himself. Let us search and try our wayes. But 11. 28.
yet notwithstanding these Injunctions, Lam. 3.

1. *How many are there, that never set about* 40.
this Duty? They will Pray, &c. but will Their o-
not be perswaded to look inward: They are mitting
as great strangers to their own, as to others the Duty
hearts. They are at no pains, to try in what altoge-
state they are: They will not try, whether ther,
they are new-born, or not; whether sancti-
fied, or not; whether a saving change hath
past upon them, or not: They will not com-
pare themselves with the Characters, which Not exa-
are given by Ministers and Books, to see mining
whether they be in the gall of bitterness, or their
not, in the bond of iniquity, or not: They Estates,
never examine what Justification, and justi-
fying and saving Faith be, and whether they
are justified, and shall be saved, like Gallio;
Little caring for these things: They examine
which way they may be greater in the World,
how to add to the heap, how to load them-
selves with thick clay, how to escape the
wrath of man, how to prolong their dayes;
but not how to prepare for Eternity, and
how to make sure of Heaven: You ask one
another, what news from Navies, from Ar-
mies, from Court, from Country; but when
did you spend one hour to ask your hearts this
serious question, *O my Soul! what will become*
of thee, when thou leavest this earthly Taber-
nacle? We travel any where, but where we
should: We are better read in any Book,

Their miscarriages about Self-trial.

than in the *sealed Book* of our own hearts : We are not at all for a *personal treaty* with our own Consciences : We are too much prying into other mens hearts , but our eyes turn not inward : We know not how it is with our Souls, and what will become of them , and we have no mind to know such matters.

Nor
Actions.

As we commune not with our hearts about our States, so we do not commune with them about our *Actions*, neither *before*, nor *after* the doing of them : Before we act , we do not advise with our Consciences, whether, what we be about to do, be *lawful* or *unlawful*; and if lawful, whether *expedient* or *inexpedient* : After we have acted, whether our actions be *good* or *evil*. How many are contented, so the *matter* be good, but examine not themselves about the *manner*, *principles*, *ends*, and *motives*? Though the Children of *Israel* knew, by the Word of the Lord, and from *Abraham* their Father, that *Canaan* was a *Land flowing with milk and honey*; yet they sent Spies, and searched it, and thereby were confirmed : If men had never so much confidence of the goodness of their Prayers, &c. yet for *Confirmation-sake*, they should send down Spies into their hearts, to see the *Clusters* of their Zeal and Affections, the utmost of the goodness of them : But alas ! how many wholly neglect this necessary and possible Duty? If all were like these, God might take up his old complaint, *No man cryed out, What have I done? Or, O my heart ! What hath God done for thee?*

Jerem.
S. 6.

2. How

2. *How backward are a more refined sort of Professours to a compliance with this Duty?* The back-wardness of the best hereunto.
How oft have your Ministers invited you, beseeched you, to hold intelligence with your own hearts, and yet cannot prevail? How backward are the best to keep a strict eye upon their little house within, to see what is done within those doors? We are apter to study others lives, yea hearts, than our own. If the best knew, how much work lies within doors, they would not be so much abroad, as they are.

3. *If we do examine our hearts, yet not by the Word of the Lord.* God would have us to try and prove our selves; then there must be some measuring Line, some Standard; some Rule, to try our selves by; but herein we are hugely defective: We try our selves, by some sudden pangs, or by the good opinion of others concerning us, or by the lives of others, (we being in an Hospital, where every one almost is lame and defective) or by some other easie Rule, that we our selves frame unto our selves, and so miserably cheat our selves. O ! how loth are we, that the light of Gods Word should be let down into the dark Cells of our hearts, for want whereof, there is much dust unobserved, and not swept away? How loth to try states or actions by the Scripture, though thereby they must be tryed at the last day? He is a good *Text-man*, that compares Scripture with Scripture: and he is a good *Christian*, that compares the Scripture and his own heart together,

Their miscarriages about Self-tryal.

gether, that credits his own heart only, when it hath the consent of the *Prophets* and *Apostles*, making them *Umpires* in the decision of all his Soul-controversies. Have recourse to the *Light that shines in a dark place*: But alas! Who obeys *this form of wholesome words*?

2 Pet. I.
19.

Being superficial therein.

4. *How overly and superficial are many in the examining themselves by the Word?* How few do examine their *State*, or their *Actions* fully? Though our hearts be very great *Impostours*, *deceitful above all things*, great *Supplanters*, full of guile; though there be thousands and thousands of *Lusts* that lye hid in our hearts; and *Deceits* like the *Sands on the Seashore*, yet how carelessly do we set upon this work? We take no pains in it.

Jer. 17.
9.

Being too seldom in it.

5. *How seldom are we in this work?* Some defer it till a *Sacrament*, and then perhaps *the house is searched for the leaven*: whereas we should keep a *petty Sessions* in our hearts every day, and do what we can to know the bottom of the projects, devices, workings of our hearts. "When going to *Prayer*, we should examine our selves, whether we have *clean hands*, and *pure hearts*, whether we are *double-minded*; if so, there is no *drawing nigh to God*: And when we come off from the *Duty*, we should conferr with our hearts, what enlargements, quicknings, meltings, humblings we had in the *Duty*; what promises, what threats were applyed by the *Spirit*; whether we saw the face of our *Beloved*, or not? When going to a *Ser-*

James
4. 8.

"man."

“*mon*, we should examine in what posture we
“are to meet with God, what Oyl we want,
“that we may be supplied? When going to
“our *Beds*, we should examine our hearts,
“how the day hath been spent, what sins
“were committed, *what Duties*, and *how*
“discharged, what temptations were resisted,
“what mercies received, and what growth
“and increase of grace we have obtained?
“When going to *Visit*, this Duty should be
“taken up before and after: *Before*, thus,
“Wherein may I honour the Lord my God in
“such company? what are their wants, that
“I may endeavour to supply them? what are
“their temptations and discouragements,
“that I may labour to support them? what
“are their graces and best attainments, that I
“may profit by them? *After*, thus, O my
“heart! What good didst thou *do* or *receive*
“in that company? wast thou *eyes to the*
“*blind*, *feet to the lame*? didst thou labour to
“bring thy Friends nearer to Jesus Christ?
“or hast thou more *estranged* and *prejudiced*
“them, *from* and *against* the way of truth?
“O my heart! Didst thou *take heed to thy*
“*wayes*, *that thou didst not sin with thy tongue*?
“Didst thou *keep thy mouth as with a bridle*?
“When going into the *Shop*, or *Field*; yet
“with *Isaack* thou art to meditate there, and
“conferr with God and thy heart, thus, O
“my heart! for whom dost thou labour, for
“*Self*, or for *God*? whose *Servant* wilt thou
“be to day, the *Worlds*, or *Christs*? O my
“heart! **How many snares are there in the**
“**World?**

Their miscarriages about Self-tryal.

“World? what a dirty place is the World?
 “and how great is thy danger, if God pre-
 “vent not by special grace? O my Soul!
 “What need hast thou of Almighty power to
 “keep thee, that thou mayest retain thy sweet-
 “ness in salt waters?

But alas! How seldom do we reflect on
 our words, or silence; on our speaking, or
 bearing; on our behaviour abroad, or at home?
 When do we consider, what our affections
 were most set upon, in such and such a place,
 in such an hour; and what our demeanour
 God-ward, and toward our Neighbour, was?
 We do not believe Bernard, who tells us,

Bern. in Cant. *If we would examine our selves as oft as we need,
 we must do it alwayes. And Chrysostomes pa-
 raphrase and counsel on Psalm 4. is of as lit-
 tle credit with us, Let this account be kept eve-
 ry day, have a little Book in thy Conscience,
 and write therein thy daily transgressions, and
 when thou layest thee down on thy Bed, bring
 forth thy Book, and take an account of thy
 sinnes.*

Growing
 weary of
 the work,
 before
 they have
 brought
 things to
 an issue.

6. *Do not we grow weary of this work, be-
 fore it be brought to any considerable Issue? We
 flagg before we come to the up-shot. Still
 some were learning, and never came to the know-
 ledge of the truth: And so some (pretend at
 least to) be alwayes trying; but they hold not
 fast: They try their hearts, as some did truths,
 till they be wholly sceptical, as ignorant whe-
 ther converted, or no, as ever: They know
 not more this year, than they did seven years
 since; but hang betwixt Heaven and Hell, in*

a dubious state, for want of skill or pains to decide this matter. We are not resolute and peremptory enough to have an account of our Souls, yea such an one, as that we may have boldness in the presence of Christ. When David thought on God, and was troubled, he never gives over his heart, till he ended this controversy: *He communed with his heart, and made a diligent search.* We should commune, till we know, whether we be *natural* or *spiritual*; and accordingly be *humbled* greatly, or greatly *rejoyce in God our Saviour*. But alas! This Age is strangely dull and sluggish: those Duties, that will cost expence of spirits, and call for the labour of the mind, we wholly omit, or do them very negligently. “Reader, Could I but prevail with thee, “to set in good earnest upon *Occasional Meditation*, and *Heart-Examination*, and *Solemn Meditation*, and *Self-Tryal*, I should “bless the Lord as long as I breath for this “enterprise of mine. *The searcher of hearts* “knoweth, that I took Pen in hand on this “design, to labour with thee in order to insid Duties, that thou might’st not be contented with a *Form of Godliness*, and rest in the external part of Religion: that more work might be done within doors, in *Closets*, and *Hearts*. O that you would reform! Not pass on to another *Chapter*. “till you have engaged your slippery inconstant hearts, to attend on this necessary “Duty! Take a few Considerations to impell you.

Psa. 77.
3, 6.

Their miscarriages about Self-tryall.

Motives
to this
great
duty,
Heathens
else will
rise up in
judgment
against
us.

1. *The very Heathen will rise up in judgment to condemn you, if you neglect this duty. A Roman Philosopher every night, before he slept, would examine himself thus, Quod malum hodie sanesti, &c. What sin hast thou opposed? wherein art thou bettered? Cato also would daily at evening call to mind, what ever he had seen, read, or done that day. I use (saith Seneca every evening) to plead my cause with my self: when the candle is gone, and all silent, I review all that I have said or done in the day: I hide nothing from mine own scrutiny: I pass by nothing. Pithagoras gave also this severe rule to his Scholars, that they should no night suffer sleep to seize their senses, till they had three times recalled the accidents and passages of the day, what evil have I committed? what good have I omitted? Except your Righteousness, exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees (saith Christ) (may not I say, of the Heathen) how can you hope for Salvation? O! how hath thine heart cheated thee with vain confidences? How hast thou cried, the Temple of the Lord: I have Abraham to my Father: whilst moral Heathens have been better acquainted with their hearts, than thou art?*

Sensitive
creatures
will else
shame us.

Yea, 2. *The very sensitive creatures may shame thee into the practise of this duty. Go thou sluggard to all the fowls of Heaven. Do they not sit in the Sun, and view themselves, look inward to themselves, turn every feather to set it at rights? Do they not look over their feathers, and pick out and throw away that*

that which is bad, and set others in their places, when misplaced.

Nay, 3. *You your selves will be judges of your selves.* You take the *glass*, and what is amiss *else* be in the *hair*, in the *face*, in the *body*, you *reli-* self-con-
sie by it: and what? no *observation* to be *demned*,
 made of the *faces* of your *Souls*? O! take the
 word of God; and make use of this *glass*,
 which now is in thine hand: doth it discover
 no *spots*, no *neglects*, no *failings*? O! view
 thy self, and humble thy self, reflect on thy
 self, and conferr with thy self, till thou art
ashamed, till thou abhorrest and loathest thy
 self before the Lord.

4. *You have a sure sign of hypocrisie on you,* The neg-
whilst this duty lies neglected; for all the up- *lest of*
 right have been very carefull to *commune with* *this duty*
their hearts, to *search their hearts*, to *make* *a sign of*
diligent search, lest any lust should be cove- *hypocri-*
red, as *Rachel* covered her *Idols*, or as *Saul*
was hid in the stuff. Nothing is more desired
 by a sincere Soul, than to be thoroughly search-
 ed: *examine me O Lord*, as Artificers do *Psa. 26.*
 whether their gold be weight or no: and 2.
prove me, as Artificers do their silver in the
 fire: *try my reins and my heart*, the most in-
 ward motions of my Soul: search me more
 deeply and thoroughly than the world can do,
 Unsound hearts have *one Dalilah*, they have
one house of Rimmon, that they cannot endure
 to be examined and found out: they are loath
 to search too farr, lest they should see what
 they are unwilling to see, and so be put up-
 on judging and condemning themselves for
 that

Their miscarriages about Self-tryall.

that, which they love beyond an *Eye*, or an *Hand*.

The sad consequences of the neglect of this duty.

5. *O the sad consequences of the neglect of this duty!* By this neglect your hearts will become *careless*, for that they are not call'd to an account, as *Servants* and *Factors* are wont, when their Masters neglect to examine them. Hereby *Sins* will grow *bolder* with you, and the more easily beset you; for that you examine not wherein their strength lies, and which way they oftneft prevail over you. Hereby the work of *Repentance* will be *obstructed*; for that innumerable *Sins*, which you are daily guilty of, will pass away unobserved, with those circumstances attending them, which make them of the greater magnitude. Hereby your *uncertainties* about your spiritual estate will *remain*: it may be converted, it may be not, it may be a Son of God, it may be not, but a Child of Hell: it may be a Believer, it may be an Enemy to God, and one of Gods curse. Hence will follow great *dejectedness* under every Providence of God: *no condition will please you*, whilst doubting and staggering: you will be apt to fear whether your food be in mercy, your dayes in mercy, your liberty, yea the Gospel in mercy to you: you will sink under adversity; for you cannot say, *the Lord is my portion*; you know not whether God will be your *strong Tower, Fortress, &c.* you cannot manage any duty well, whilst this lies neglected. How can you walk before God with an *humble heart*, when you know not what

Mica.
6. 8.

what your hearts are? How can you *serve him with an upright heart*, whilst a stranger to this duty? The very Heathens knew how necessary this was to all their duties, and therefore discreetly caused to be writ over the Temple at Delphos, *γνῶθι σεαυτόν*, *Know thy self*. Miserable are the disappointments that will attend *English* Professours, unless they fall into a compliance with this duty: *you will dye deluded*: like the foolish Virgins, you will not know your undone condition, till it be too late: you lie deceived in matters of the greatest and highest concernment: you are cheated hitherto in things of eternity: you are vexed, when deceived by a Friend, when supplanted by a Neighbour: O! how will it pierce your Souls, to be cheated by your selves? When we would exclaim against a Knave, we say, he will cozen his Father; the nearer the Relation, the more sordid the Cheat: O! but here is one that lies in thy bosome, and thou and it, go to cheat each other continually. *Let no man deceive himself: 1 Cor. 3.* it seems we are apt to do so: But O! how great will your confusion be when this deceit shall be manifested, when you shall see your selves frustrated of all your hopes, and the glory, your hearts promised you? How will you be confounded, when you shall say, *we looked for Heaven; but behold Hell: we looked for Salvation; but behold Destruction: we looked to be made perfectly Happy; but* (O how our hearts have cheated us!) *we must be damned: we thought we had as good hearts as any,*

Their miscarriages about Self-tryall.

as true Faith, as sound Repentance, as cordial love to God, as any of our Neighbours, as any Precisians of the Countrey: we fools counted their life madness, &c. O! what daggers and swords will these frustrations be to you?

We and
our
hearts
shall not
always
be stran-
gers.

6. *If you be loth to see how it is with you now, how will you be able to behold what shall be seen at the day of Judgement? Though you now will not know your hearts; though you are so stately, as not to speak with them, or loth to examine the dirty Corners; yet God is coming with his Fan: the books must be opened, and every page of thy heart will be unfolded; for God will bring to light every hidden work of dishonesty: God will pluck off the rough garment, which thou wearest to deceive: thy inward parts, which are very wickedness, shall be made manifest: and then thou shalt be speech-less, as if thou hadst a muzzle put upon thy mouth, as the word signifieth. Well, seeing murder will out (as we say) the secrets of the Soul must be brought forth, is it not better by judging our selves by a severe tryall and sentence on our selves to prevent the wofullness of the last day? Judged we must, and shall be: is it not then thy wisdom to judge thy self here in thy Closet, that thou mayst be judged by God with a judgement of Absolution, and not of Condemnation? Is it nothing to have all thy unrepented and unforgiven sins published on the house-top, made known to all the World, at the great day? How will thine heart endure then, when the Lord shall come to deal with*

Ezek.

22. 14.

with thee? You will not see; but you shall see: Isa. 26.
You will not retire, the World lyes in your hearts, Business comes in, and takes up all your time and spirits: God is about to strip you, to ease you of your Callings, you shall come naked to the Barr of God, you shall have no Family business to distract you: a fair tryal there shall be, but a sad one for thee; *Your sins shall find you out.* You have had many *Numb. Calls:* once more I call upon you, in the *32. 23.* Name of Christ, to examine your hearts, by the words of this Book, which you have, or shall read: And be sure of it, *If you will not nor try your-selves by the Word, God will try you by his Works.* Thus saith the Lord, *I will melt them, and try them:* But how will God *Jer. 9. 7.* melt them, and try them? *Shall I not visit them for these things, saith the Lord: Shall v. 9.* not my Soul be avenged on such a Nation as this? *For the mountains will I take up a weeping and v. 10.* wailing, and for the habitations of the wilderness a lamentation; because they are burnt up, so that none can pass through them, neither can men hear the voice of the Cattel, both the Fowl of the Heavens, and the Beasts are fled, they are gone. And I will make Jerusalem heaps, *v. 11.* and a Den of Dragons; and I will make the Cities of Judah desolate, without an Inhabitant.



CHAP. XXI.

Their Pride.

Professors **B**Ehold, *This was the iniquity of thy Sister*
 Pride, *Sodom, Pride, &c. And is not this De-*
villish Sin become our National Sin?

16. 49. *1. With what a bold and impudent face have*
 Eviden- *we come and appeared before God? Who hath*
 ced in Ir- *sensibly exprest himself in Abraham's words,*
 reverence *Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto*
 in address- *the Lord, which am but dust and ashes. In-*
 ses to *stead of a reverential fear of God, our beha-*
 God. *viour hath been stout against God, and we*
 Gen. 18. *have not trembled in his presence, no nor*
 27. *whilst we have been terribly threatned by*
God, yea when his dreadful threatnings have
been terribly executed upon us: Even in such
times we have irreverently rush'd into his
Presence.

Not *2. How have our Wills risen up against the*
 stooping *Will of God? The humble Soul stoops to Gods*
 to the *Preceptive and Providential Will; but we*
 Will of *have wretchedly thwarted God in all his*
 God. *Counsels and Dispensations. The great Con-*
troversie betwixt God and man, is, whose
Will shall stand, God or mans? O! How im-
pudently have we contended with the Lord
about

about this? We have even thought our selves too great to be cro't. How many think it even a disgrace to their noble Spirits, to be still and silent; even under the hand of God; but they must be clamorous, and speaking against the very Heavens? They are ready to say, This was not well done by God, he might have given, or continued to us, this and the other mercy: They mislike many of Gods Dispensations of Providence: they cannot heartily say, that *God holds the reins best*, and and guides all his affairs with the greatest wisdom: they think if they were the Orderers of matters in the World, things would be better governed: like proud *Abolon*, who ^{2 Sam.} wished he were in *David's* stead, they wish ^{15. 4.} they were in Gods stead: A proud man would have others under him, yea, he would have the great and glorious God subject to his will, to do what he pleaseth, to yield to his desires. Whence are all your disputings and quarrellings with God, save from the Pride of your hearts? The humble Soul cries, *Not my will, but thine be done. It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good*; But so over-grown are we with an opinion of our own wisdom and worth, that we must limit the Holy One, and order him how to rule the World: God must stoop to our prescriptions, or else we swell and break with discontent. "O! Is
"not God wiser than man? Shall the clay say
"to the Potter, Why hast thou shaped me
"thus? Rather let the potshards strive with
"the potshards (wormes with wormes)
O about

The sins of Sodom found amongst us.

“about the preeminence of wills, than we
 “contend with God. O! When will your
 “proud hearts stoop to God? when shall
 “his Will be the Rule? when will you be
 “willing to be dealt withall as God
 “pleaseth?

Lothness
 that God
 should be
 exalted,
 unless
 they be
 instru-
 ments
 and
 sharers.

3. *How loth are we that God should have any glory in the World, unless we share in it, or unless we be the immediate instruments of exalting of him?* We are willing God should have some glory, so we may share with him: content that *Free-will* and *Free-grace* should divide the spoyle: the honour of our salvation shall be ascribed, partly to our endeavours, and the honesty of our wills, in choosing the way of life, and partly to Christs merits. We are willing God should be exalted, so it be by our selves, so that we may be famous in promoting the design; else we are discontented. Few are contented that Gods work should be carried on by any hand save their own, that some glory may descend on them. Most are like the proud Senatours of *Rome*, that could have been contented, that Christ should have been numbred among their Gods, but that the Motion began not with themselves. O! Think with your selves, how many good motions, tending to the edification of the body of Christ, have miscarried upon this account, because others should not have the honour of *beginning* them? Whence can it be, save from the Pride of our hearts, that we have so little rejoyced, when God hath been advanced by others, and we had no hand there-
 in?

in? We are afraid that others glory will eclipse ours.

4. *How scornfully do we look on some of the Lords Commandments?* To reprove Offendours, to visit the Poor, and conferr with them, yea to be seen in the company of poor Christians, is accounted a disgrace; we think it an abasement to our Spirits, and a discredit to us, to be known in any relation to them. Who can bow to the meanest services of the Sanctuary?

5. *How unwilling are we to come to Christ,* till we have our double money in our sacks, till we have fitted and prepared our selves, and made our selves worthy of him? Hence all the offers of Christ are neglected, till the Soul hath wrought it self into a better disposition for Christs embraces and loves; and therefore when we can weep bitterly, and pray fervently, we will come to Christ, but will not be beholding to him to work both to will and to do: We would be the *Alpha*; and he shall be the *Omega*: We would begin some glorious work, and then tie him to our performances, and oblige him by our great and glorious services and reformation: We hate to be *Almes-people*; To begg I am ashamed: We are loth to receive all from God, we would purchase and merit somewhat.

6. *How Unthankfull are we?* A Proud man unthankful is alwayes an Unthankful man, and an Unthankful man is alwayes a Proud man. He thinks he deserves all that is conferr'd upon him. The humble man counts himself less

than the least of all Gods mercies; but the proud man reckoneth all that he enjoyeth too little. Do not we think God is beholding to us for our Duties and Services, more than we are to him for Life, Breath, and all our Possessions?

Setting
upon
great
works in
their own
strength.

7. *Dare we not set upon the highest Services in our own strength, without calling in the help of the Almighty?* The Proud man seldom believes his own insufficiencies to think a good thought: He can rush upon Prayer, reading the Scriptures, Meditation, and such difficult works of Christianity, without imploring the aid and succours of Heavens Influences:

Being
hasty
Beggars.

8. *Are we not hasty Beggars?* If we petition for Pardons, or Holiness, and God comes not to the door at the first or second knock, away we are flinging: *There is no hope, why should I wait on the Lord any longer?* We dare prescribe God a day, and by thus limiting God, our Pride appears, as if we knew the fittest seasons for deliverance and mercy. Were we of an humble heart, we would wait all our dayes with patience, yea we would resolve to be exalting of God, whatever becomes of our selves, and to pay him the homage of duty, though he for just reasons be pleased to frown upon our Prayers, and to deny us all the requests of our Souls. I hear some say, they would pray, hear, read, wait upon God all their dayes, so they were sure God would accept them, and smile upon them in the last hour: I say to these, You ought

ought to serve God with all your time and strength, you are bound to God in duty, though God were under no obligations by promise unto you. O the Pride of our Spirits! that we dare tell God, We will not serve thee unless thou humour us.

9. *Do not we think God hath punished us above our Deserts?* Do not we hence cry out more of our smart and pain, than we do of our sins and provocations? Were we humble, we would bless the Lord, that he hath *strained his rough wind in the day of his East wind*: We would wonder, that it is so well with us, that we are not in a worse condition: We would cry out, *It is of the Lords mercy that we are not consumed.* *Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?* How loth are we to confess our iniquities have deserved all that we suffer, and a great deal more, and therefore to humble our selves for our sins? How do we endeavour to hide our sins from God, Man, and our selves?

10. *How apt are we to admire our selves for supposed Excellencies?* For supposed Beauty, Parts, Reason, Wit and Understanding, yea and for supposed Grace? Man (saith one) is a proud piece of flesh, and a small matter will make him shew his pride, and spread his plumes.

11. *How apt are we to boast of any Good we do?* Of our Valour in the Field, of our Discourses in such and such Company, how wisely we discharged such a Service, how well we

Account-
ing Gods
Judge-
ments
greater
than their
Deserts.

Lam. 3.
40.

Admiring
what they
suppose
they
have.

Boasting
of what
Good
they have
and do.

behaved our selves, in such an Action? *Com: see my Zeal for the Lord.* Look to your hearts, you will find them unduly transported, as with the thoughts of your gifts and graces, so with what you do through the gift of grace. Our very Graces are often an occasion of boasting. 'Tis a rare thing to see a man *rich in gifts, and poor in spirit.* Even *knowledge puffeth up.*

1 Cor. 8.
1.

Puffed up
with any
thing of
theirs.

12. *Doth not any thing of ours swell us?* Are not some puff'd up with their fine Clothes, new Attires, Ribbons, Dressings, yea with their very Spots? Their Feathers, their Hair, the excrements of Beasts and Men, make them flye high. Are not some puff'd up with their Birth? Hence they boast, that they have the Blood of Kings and Nobles running in their Veins; or else that they are of the Stock of *Abraham*, descended from Parents eminent for Piety, though they have sadly degenerated from their lives and walks. How many are swell'd with their Estates? That they have Shops full, Houses full, and Baggs full, puffeth them up. Whilst all the treasure is shewed, how glad is the heart? Even *Herziah* was glad to shew the Embassadors the house of his precious things. How are others puffed up with the smiles and respects of great men? And yet how soon may the Sun be over-cast? Then they are no more heeded than the Dial is, when the Sun is in a Cloud, How doth the bodily strength and perfections of others swell them, though every moment they are going down into the dust? *What is*

Isa. 39.
2.

your life? *It is even a vapour, that appeareth James for a little time, and then vanisheth away.* 4. 14.
 How are others swell'd with their Church-priviledges? *The Temple of the Lord, the Ezek. Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord are* 7. 4.
we. These are lying words not to be trusted in.
 Others with their revelations and high enjoyments? *Paul was in danger of being ex- 2 Cor. alted above measure through the abundance of* 12. 7.
the revelations, therefore was given to him a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him, lest he should be exalted above measure. — How few have heeded that of the Apostle, *Let no man think of himself more highly than he ought to think? and that, If a man* Rom. 12. 3.
think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. How have we Gal. 6. 3.
 been puff'd up with our Reformation, Ministers, Churches, Professours? Preferring them before others at home and abroad.

13. *How little suspicion have we of our selves?* Not suspecting
 Of our baseness, and sinfullness, the deceits
 and treachery of our own hearts? With how
 much confidence do we thrust our selves into
 wicked mens company, and fear not to be
 leavened with them? How little do we sus-
 pect that we shall fall from the grace we have,
 or seem to have? *We are high minded and*
therefore fear not. We do not suspect that
 there are worse abominations within than yet
 are discovered. How do we (pretend to)
 bless God that our hearts are good? We fear
 not the worst of our selves. If others be o-
 vercome with uncleanness, passion, &c. we

The sins of Sodom found amongst us.

are confident we shall never so dishonour God.

Fuming
at plain
dealing.

14. *Do not we fret and fume when any go about to discover the vileness within? I have heard of some Ladies, that have hated the glass that gave them a true sight of their spots, and deformities. Humble David loved them best who most convincingly re-proved him for what was amiss in him.*

Psa.

141. 5.

Not being able
to deny themselves in
any lawfull content.

Being troubled
that any Rule binds
themselves:

15. *We must be pleased: we must have our sports, and the utmost of our liberty, though God and man suffer by it never so much: we cannot stoop to deny our selves some lawfull contentments, though God be to be honoured thereby.*

16. *How have we been troubled that any save our selves have Ruled and been in Authority? Few have learnt the Humility of Jothams Ol ve-tree, Fig-tree, and Vine? The Bramble thinks himself worthy to be in the highest place. O! what fightings, what sidings, what Plots to get higher? Haman was never contented till every knee bowed: not so much as one Mordecai must be excused. If men would but speak out, they think they are fitter for Magistrates and Ministers, than those that are employed: so that whereas the humble man thinks every one better than himself, they on the contrary think themselves the only men. Do not we account it below us to submit to every Ordinance of man, though for the Lords sake? And when we cannot do what we are commanded, who suffers meekly and not in anger against the highest*

Pow-

1 Pet. 2.

13.

Powers ? Do not we suffer in proud wrath ? *Prov.*

17. *How glad are we if others take notice of 21. 24. our actions ?* And how are we pleased if they And glad commend us for them ; and yet we would to be not have them think so ? We will discom- commen- mend our own Prayers, for deadness, strait- ded by o- nels, and our selves for want of parts, &c. on thers, purpose to draw forth others praise. How they dis- few are unwilling that others should have commend good thoughts of them, in reference to them- them- selves ? How few are troubled at the praises selves, of their friends more than at flashes of light- ning cast into their faces ?

18. *How do we rejoyce, when others cry us up, yea to be even when we know it is unjustly, when we know cryed up how hollow-hearted, low-spirited, and selfish we undefer- are ?* Are not we exceedingly pleased at the vedly. flowers that are spread upon our dead Corps ? Though the praises be not due to us, yet how do we drink them in as the Hart doth water.

19. *How Magisterial have we been ?* What Being great Dictatours to others ; as if all were Dicta- bound to dance after us ? We will not abate tours to others, at all, but every poor Mordecai must do obeysance to our opinion.

20. *How are we guilty of despising, yea Despising scorning those that are (as we think) below us others. in Birth, in Estate, in Power, in Parts, and Gifts, yea in graces ?* How do we evidence *Isa. 58.* our slighting of them in our looks, in our 9. words, in our gestures and behaviours ? Pride (saith one) is a bad Mother of many bad Children, these three especially, boasting of our selves, contending with, and despising of others.

others. How unlike are we herein unto God?
Job. 35. Behold God is mighty (i. e. most mighty, most great, the positive is put for the superlative degree) and yet he despiseth not any, i. e. any of those who have no might, no greatness : yea how do we herein reproach our Maker ? God (saith one) made every man an object of respect, or pity, 'tis Pride that makes any the objects of contempt, and in them their Maker. Who so mocketh the poor, reproacheth his Maker.

unwilling to confess their faults unto others ? Perhaps they will reform, but hate it to the death to go and acknowledge their trespasses to others, whom 'tis clear and proved they have trespassed against. How many have you injured by tale-bearing, backbiting, &c. Must not God work a miracle to perswade us to make restitution, to go to the parties wronged, and confess the wrong there, and then to go from house to house to vindicate and clear the party, there where before we had wickedly stained and aspersed him? This makes me cry out, *Lord, who shall be saved ? Lord, many are called, but few are chosen.*

Reproving haughtily do we manage it ? How do our words, yea *Isa. 3. 5. looks, and gestures, evidence our haughtiness ? The Child becometh himself proudly against the Ancient.*

Vindicating themselves maliciously. 23. *What a stirr, what a noise do we make to vindicate our selves when aspersed and calumniated?*

nated? Whereas the humble Soul would never stir to clear himself (as knowing how much guilt and sin there is within) were it not for the honour of God, and the edification of the Lords people, which may be hindered, if prejudices and unjust reproaches be not removed: Alas! most men study revenges, and like the Grave are unsatiable in their malicious vindications.

24. *How bitter have we been against dissent-Being ing Brethren?* Would we not have cast them bloudily out of the Land, if we might have had our minded wills? Did not we talk of shipping away all toward that would not submit to our way of wor-senting ship? Did not we count them, who were Brethren, divided in circumstances and ceremonies from us, like Dogs and Pagans, unfit to subsist among us?

No wonder if for these things God make us a shame, and a derision, a Proverb, and a by-word to all the Nations round about us. O! our Pride testifies to our faces: we are guilty of what brought down fire on Sodom: This is the sin, that God setteth himself in battle-array against, (so the word for resisting *Jam. 4.* in that Scripture, *God resisteth the proud, fig-6.* *nifieth:*) 'Tis that which makes God abhor us and our offerings. *Every one that is proud Prov. in heart is an abomination to the Lord. Be-16. 5.* lieve it, Gods eyes are upon the haughty, that he may bring them down, and he watcheth his opportunity to do it. *The Lord know-Psa. 38. eth the proud afar off.* When God meets with a spectacle, that he cannot endure to look upon

The sins of Sodom found amongst us.

upon, he turns from it, whilst it is afarr off. What shall I say? Pride is the first of those
Prov. seven things, which are an abomination to the
 6. 17. Lord. And no wonder that God so loatheth it, whilst it crosseth the great design of God in the Gospel, which is to humble the moun-
1 Cor. I. tains, that no flesh should glory in his presence,
 29, 31. but that he that glorieth, should glory only in the Lord.

CHAP. XXII.

Their Intemperance in Eating.

Professors
 Fulness of
 Bread.

THough *Pride* was the first spark that blow'd up the glory of *Sodom*, yet there was also *Fulness of Bread*, that made the flame the greater. Behold,
Ezek. This was the iniquity of thy Sister *Sodom*,
 16. 49. *Pride, Fulness of Bread, &c.* Their *Pride* was evidenced in their *Fulness of Bread*, as the Cause in its Effect. The word *σοφρονη*, which signifieth to be temperate, is (as one well observes) applyed frequently to the Mind, in opposition to *Pride*; because *Sobriety* proceeds from an humble sense that nothing is ours, but all that we have is Gods; and all *Intemperance* is commonly the issue of a proud Spirit, which makes men look on them-

themselves as *Owners*, and all Creatures as their proper Goods, which are perfectly at their disposal. Hence the *Crown of Pride*, *Isa. 28.* and the *Drunkards of Ephraim*, are both *1, 3.* names for the same persons. And is not our Pride evidenced in our Fulness of Bread? *Sodom's* intemperance in eating (not to insist on intemperance in drinking) was very great, but I fear *Englands* hath exceeded *Sodom's*: I will not say *all your labour is for the mouth*, *Eccles.* (as *Solomon* complains) *and yet the appetite is not fill'd*; but this I say, that *some* live to eat, *some* sacrifice all to the belly, to *some* the belly is a God. Few can displease their appetite: like prophane *Esau*, they part from their heritage, from the blessing of the first-born, for a mess of pottage, for a little pleasure to the taste. How will we *deny* our selves in respect of *Life*, when we cannot *deny* our selves in respect of a little *Meat*? As Heaven and God are low, very low with them, that cannot deny themselves in a little *Indian-Smoke*, in a Pipe, in a cup of Liquor, but will be immoderate in these, though thereby they hazard the displeasure of God: So are they very low with us, if we cannot deny our selves in our Morsels. All our ruine came in at this door, that *Adam* ventured the displeasure of God, to eat a little pleasant Fruit. A man would think, that the wounds we received by the mouth, should make us check our appetite all our days.

1. *How have we been guilty of eating too much?* A little would content Nature, which hath

Evidenced in their much eating.

7

The sins of Sodom found amongst us.

Luke
21. 14.

Prov.
23. 2.

Eph. 2. 3

Rev. 18.
7.

hath therefore given us a little *Mouth* and *Stomach*, to teach us (saith an Ancient) Moderation. How have *our hearts been overcharged with surfeiting*, whilst *wicked men with drunkenness*? How have we forgot Christ's charge against this sin, even to his own Disciples? Have we not hereby been disabled to perform the service which we owe to God? As *some* have been *strong to drink*, so *others to eat*: Both have been unfitted to wait upon God thereby. The end of our eating should have been to *fit us*, not to *indispose us* for the service of God. We should measure our Chear by that which *Nature requireth*, and not by that which a greedy *Appetite desireth*. We divest our selves of *Man*, of Reason, that should guide us, when we are led by a sensual Appetite. And yet alas! When we have eaten enough, and perhaps more than enough, a new Dish at the second course makes us fall on without fear or wit, and we put not a *knife* to our *throat*. Serving divers lusts and pleasures, is the high way to damnation. This way sin entred into the World, and in this way, O! how many are passing to Hell? If you would adopt your selves *Children of wrath*, then *fullfill the desires of the flesh*. O that we should be so senseless, so brutish, as to venture the eternal ruine of our Souls to gratifie our appetites for a quarter of an hour! *She that fared deliciously, hath torment and sorrow given her.* If that you will choose to be beasts here, and to eat as beasts, as much as you can, Know that

that Heaven will not (as *Noahs Ark* did) admit of any Beasts within it. When *Tertullian* gives an account of the Christians Feasts ; In our feeding (saith he) we remember that we are to pray at night : Prayer is the first and last dish of the feast : and when we depart our behaviour is so religious and modest , that one would have thought , we had rather been at a Sermon than at a Supper. Blush, O Reader ! to consider how far short we fall of these Christians in our banqueting hours. Believe it, Intemperance and Luxury are National sinnes , the sins of *England*. It was spoken (unless I am mis-informed) of our Nation , That we build as if we should live for ever , and eat as if we should die presently. O ! when shall we imitate that great Apostle ? *All things* (saith he) ^{I Cor.} are lawful for me ; but I will not be brought under the power of any. ^{6. 12.} It is a base thing for a man to be under the power of Drinks, Apparel, Recreations, and so of Flesh, of Meats, to be a Vassal to those things over which the Lord hath given him dominion. He that loveth any thing too much, (saith *Qui nimis Aquinas*) is in a sense Servant thereunto. *rem ali-* And what saith the Apostle ? *Know ye not, that quam a-* to whom ye yield your selves servants to obey, his *mat quo-* servants ye are , to whom ye obey , whether of *dam mo-* sin , &c. How many serve not our Lord *do servus* Jesus Christ , but their own bellies ? How *istius effi-* many are like the men of the old World , *citur.* *Rom. 6.* Given to eating ? so the word in the Original *16.* properly signifieth. *Mat.*

24. 38.

2. How

The sins of Sodom found amongst us!

The
costliness
of their
Diet,

Above
their
Estates.

2. *How have our meats born no proportion to our gains and incomes?* The rich man, that fared deliciously, had some pretence for it, for he had riches to countervail the expences of his Table: But doth not the lowness of our Estates require a meaner Table? God knows we have been *worse than Infidels* on this account, in that we have been so farr from providing for our own, that to pamper the flesh with costly diet, we have suddenly impoverished our selves, and brought our Children to live upon others trenchers, whereas we should have abated of our superfluities for their sakes, if not for our own. Goe voluptuous wretch, unto the *Ant*, and to the *Bee*, they provide for Winter; but thou hast had no forecast, and so *Poverty comes in on thee and thine*, as an armed man, irresistably.

unsuita-
ble to the
Times,

3. *How have our Tables been unsuitable to the Times we live in?* Whether *Zion* wear the garments of joy, or of heaviness, all's one, the belly must be served, our dishes must not abate. Thou farest deliciously every day: All times are alike to thee. This is a great sin, and I cannot but charge many Professours with it. Respect is not had to the tokens of Gods wrath. *We eat without fear: Without fear of the wrath of God, that is ready to break forth upon us.* In this day

Jude v.
12.

Isa. 22. doth the Lord of Hosts call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth: And behold, joy and gladness, slaying Oxen, and killing Sheep, (actions
lawful

lawfull enough at another time) eating flesh , and drinking wine , &c. And it was revealed in mine ears by the Lord of Hosts , surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till ye die , saith the Lord God of Hosts. We have made little or no distinction of times : Perhaps a Fast every month is (carelessly) kept ; but every day should be a day of abstinence , every day we should abate of what we might enjoy , if the judgements of God were not amongst us , and others impending over us : God hath a controversie with us for feasting , when Joseph is in the pit , and for our eating the Lambs of the Flocks ; for that we are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph. Amos 4. 6.

4. How little respect have we had to the necessities of the Saints ? O ! if there were any true love to God , to Religion , to the Church of God , and to the Saints of the most high , we would abate of our worldly comforts in this day , we would cut our selves short of what we were wont to lay out , not only in fine clothes , but in house-keeping , in expensive meats and drinks , we would not give such liberty to the satisfying of the flesh , we would be more sparing in our diet , that we might be in the greater capacity to promote pious and charitable designs. But alas ! iniquity abound , and the love of many (save to their guts) waxeth cold. Not respecting the Saints necessities Membra putrida & mortua qua sensum non habent ; tales sunt Christiani , qui de alienis affectionibus non dolent. Aug. in Psal. 130.

5. Doe not we eat without an holy fear of God ? The Elders of Israel did eat their bread without fear of God.

*Exod.**18. 12.*

before the Lord. But so have not we, so do not we, eat as in the presence of God. Have not some been so eager upon the pleasing of the flesh, and gratifying of their sensual appetites, as that they have (secretly at least) been troubled at a long grace (as it is called) before meat? Have not some fall'n to their meat without invoking God to be with them? How unlike are such unto Christ, whose usual practise it was, to lift up his eyes to Heaven, and crave a blessing upon the creatures before he did partake of them? How distracted have been the thoughts of others that have prayed, in that short time? How were their thoughts on the meats and drinks? How hastily do men after a blessing is craved run to the Dish, without any the least pause or consideration whether God heard them yea or no, when they called to him? How commonly do we raze our Petitions, snatch them out of Gods hands, I mean, contradict all our Prayers? We pray our discourses may be heavenly, and they are altogether earthly. Few can say as Blessed *Dad* was wont at the close of the meal, *Blessed be God, not one word of earthly things since we sate down?* We pray we may eat for God, and we eat for our selves. We cannot say that *our Spikenard sends forth his pleasant smells, whilst we are at the Table.* We have not so good a plea to make as some, *we have eate and drank in thy presence.* This is not written over our Tables, *Thou God seest.* We can seldom call our Table *Penuel*, because we have
seen

seen God in this place. How little do we consider, that they are Gods creatures. *She* *Hof. 2.*
did not know that I gave her Corn, &c. And 8.
 that as the meat is Gods, so it is he who gives us appetites, and strength and ability to put every crum into our mouths; for in him we live and move. How little do we believe that we must account for every bit and drop? How little do we consider that God stoops the creatures to us, that we may stoop to him, and lay down our lives as willingly for Gods honour, as God causeth the creature to bleed and die for our use? How little do we think of the Heavenly banquet, that our Father is preparing for us, where the cloth shall never be taken away, where we shall hunger and thirst no more; but be fully satisfied, and that for ever and ever? Examine your spirits and frames at your Tables, whether the fear of God be before your eyes, whether you stand in awe of him? It may be found that you never more forget God, than when God is mostly remembring you: When his goods are most in your hands and mouths, your mouths are so full, that they cannot shew forth his praise: your eyes are so held to your Belly-gods, that you forget *Jehovah*. Are there not some that will crave a blessing before they eat, that yet fail to return thanks afterwards, though *Joel* saith in his Prophecie to Gods people, *ye shall eat and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God?* *Deut. 8.*
10, 11.
Joel 2.
26.

6. Have not men fed without a Christian fear of scandalizing others upon our eating pro-
 Of scandalizing others
 fane.

The sins of Sodom found amongst us.

fusely? What saith the Drunkard? Why may not I tosse the Kan or Pot (in plain English) be drunk as well as such and such gormandise? why may not I drink immoderately as well as such eat immoderately? why may not we sit one or two hours to drink, as well as such sit one hour or two to fill their panch with meat? Gluttons harden and justifie Drunk-

Jude v.
12.

Ecce qui ards. *Jude* will tell you, that *sensual* per-
jaſant sons are the *Spots* of a Christian society. The
ſere- old Gentiles in *Cyprians* days were much scan-
demptos, dalized at the intemperance of Christians. Lo,
&c. these great Boasters, who pretend to be redem-
Cyp. de ed from the tyranny of the Devil, and to be
duplici dead to the World, what slaves are they to their
Marty- own sensual desires? O my Brethren! It is
rio. good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, or
Rom. 14. any thing else, whereby thy Brother stumbleth,
21. or is offended, or made weak.

Offsnares 7. Do not we eat without a prudent fear of
in eating. the snares that are in our Dishes? In eating
there ought to be much caution. *Job* was a-
Job. 1. fraid of the entertainments of his Children.
5, 6. He was a wise man, and knew that there were
more guests than were invited. I wish wee
knew it too. We think if the Sonnes of God
come together, the Devil will not come with
them, though the Scripture assures us he will.
It would be some check when we sit at the
Table to consider that the first immoderate
Sop is handed over by the Devil, and in goes
he with it into our Souls.

Eating
for low
and bafe
ends,

8. How have we had low, base, earthly, sen-
sual, and Devillish ends in our eating? not to
refresh our bodies, but our pallats, not to
glo-

glorifie God, but to pamper the flesh? yea have not some men fed on such and such dishes on purpose to irritate and provoke their lusts? Sure our Enemy is strong enough, we had need beat down the body and keep it under, and not put weapons into our Enemies hands. What saith the wise man? *When thou sittest to eat with a Ruler* (such keep plentiful tables, especially Magistrates on their Feast dayes) *consider diligently what is before thee, and put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite, i. e.* *Bridle* *Prov.* *thine appetite by diligence, yea force, let* *23. 1, 2.* *not the slave alwayes be on horseback, al-* *See the* *ways rule, be as circumspect, as if thou* *large* *were under the razour: or thus, consider dili-* *English* *Annor.* *gently what is before thee, else thou puttest a* *knife to thy throat, i. e.* *thou endangerest thy life, yea thy soul, shouldest thou give way to thy greedy appetite to feed upon all the dainties on the Table? tis a thousand to one but thy meats will be incentives to lust. What saith the Apostle, Whether you eat or drink, &c. let all be done to the glory of God. Why doth the Apostle name those actions of eating and drinking, but because we commonly eat and drink (at best) meerly to please the appetite, and not to fit for Gods Service? When we have taken as much as serves this end, yet we must have one bit more, or one dish more to please our fleshly desires, and so God and the Devil must part stakes.*

To shut up this: I believe many men dig their graves with their teeth, and their bellies with their tongues, their liquorish tongues.

Among the millions that are now in the grave or hell, their inordinate appetite lusted most thither. I say not but we may please our palate, at some times especially, a great liberty is indulged to the sick; but if we have not an higher design than to please the appetite, our Belly is our God. Little do many think that they are setting up another God at their Tables. The *Babylonians* had *Bel* for their God, a *God of Brass*; but these men have a *God of flesh*. The *Rabbies* say, *he is a Glutton or Belly-God that eats a pound of flesh, and drinks a quart of wine*. Have not we many such? and do they not *sacrifice to their God with a bowed knee too*? Repent, O *England*! repent, of thy abuse of the good creatures of God, and thereby of thy sacrilegious robbing of God of his worship and time. How often have ye so cramb'd your selves that you have been unfit for any acts of worship, yea for any of the works of your particular callings? Your heads have been heavy, and spirits dull, and so God hath had the *Carkas*, but excesses have taken away the heart. The *tabret and wine are in your feasts*, but you regard not the work of the Lord, &c. therefore my people are gone into Captivity. I wish two things for you, First, That you would be as ingenious as *Austin* was, who confessed he was no drunkard; but yet sometimes too immoderate in eating. And Secondly, That you would be restless till God hath taught you, what he did him: Lord (saith he) thou hast now taught me to use my meat, as my medicine, to repair,

Hos. 4.
11.

Isa. 5.

11, 12,

13.

not to oppress nature. O ! when will the grace of God appear, and teach us to deny worldly lusts, and to live soberly ? Tit. 2.
11, 12.

CHAP. XXIII.

Their abundance of Idleness.

A Third Sin of Sodom was Idleness, *Re-Profe-*
hold, this was the iniquity of thy Sister Sodom, &c. *an abundance of Idleness was in her* Idleness;
and in her daughters. This Sin is the *Compani-* Ezek.
on of the former : when the belly is full, the 16.49.
bones would be at rest, and when men have
eat and drunk to excess, then they rise up to
play. This, and the former, are *City-sins*,
they were found in *Sodom and Gomorrah*; and
I wish they were not among us also.

1. *How are we guilty of abundance of Idleness in our particular callings ?* Few have this particular
for their Motto, *Laboremus*; Let us be work-callings.
ing, I mean, working that which we ought.
How many at the great day will God upbraid
with, *O wicked and slothfull servants !* Every
man hath a Talent of time and strength, but
it is hid, it is not imployed, at least as it
ought. God made not man to play, but to
sweat out his living. 'Twas Gods Ordinance
in Paradise, and since that we are enjoyned

- Ezek.* 18. 18. *to labour with our hands, and not to eat the bread of Idleness. How many, because they have not done good among their people, shall dye in their iniquity? Our land is full of drones; and no wonder; for we train up our Children in Idleness, and indulge to them, whilst wasting the first of their dayes in foolish pleasures and recreations. Forraigners breed their Children (to our shame be it spoken) to work those gaies with their hands, which our Children must play away their time with: hence they having inured themselves to Idleness they hate labour for the future. Christ*
- Mat.* 20. 3, 6. *saw some standing Idle: here he might see many: He could not endure it, he thought it unreasonable, why stand yee here all the day Idle? O! how many are idle all the dayes of their lives? How many Gentlemen and their Sons are there without a calling? They live as if God had sent them into the world to make their hands as piches for birds to sit upon: they are of no use to the Publick. In Cities how Idle are the Dames? They live as if God had given them reasonable Souls, and the light of the Sun only to dress themselves, to view a glasse, and to paint and adorn their Carcasses.*
- 2 Thes.* 3. 11. *There are some among you that work not at all; and yet busy-bodies, busie to invent wayes to pass away time, though time be still running, and they are hastning into Eternity. Doing nothing (saith the Apostle) and yet working every where, save where they should: busie to go from house to house to complement friends, to devour others times: busie*

to carry tales and news, but hating the work of their calling, wherein God hath set them. The whole life of many is to eat, and drink, and sleep, and sport, and sit, and talk, and laugh themselves fat (but there is leanness in their Souls.) A kind of vagrant people they be, that having little to do, the Devil is loth they should be idle, and therefore he hires them to devour time, to carry news and tales to mispend others times: *They learn to be idle: 1 Tim. 5. 13.* they study which way they may mispend time, wandring from house to house, and yet they are not only idle, but *busie bodies*. One compares them to *Pedlars*, opening their Packs, and dropping here a tale, and there a tale. These are at leisure to hear the Devil, and to observe his Orders. He that will not serve God at home, the Devil, rather than he shall stand out, will send him of his errands, and get him to put his Sickle into another mans Corn. "Go (saith Satan) in-
"to that house, and rail against such a good
"man, carry his miscarriage from one to a-
"nother, till his name rots and stinks in their
"Nostrils: Go to such a mans door, he is
"employed in reading the Scriptures and
"good books, or Catechising his Family, &c.
Go and divert him, eat up his time, that he may have no leisure for such works. He goes, he is a *busie-body*, a *tatler* too. He must goe whom the Devil drives; Hence occasion is given to the Adversary to speak reproachfully, for that so many are turned aside after Satan.

Let it be considered and lamented,

- ted, how much precious time is devoured in the Bed; Five hours sleep will suffice for some constitutions: The utmost that Physicians allow, is seven hours; but some waste and bury themselves in their Beds almost half their time. How little do many consider, that in the Day of Judgement, they must give account, as for every idle word, so for their idleness in their Bed-chambers? Sluggard, view the Sun, its running a race, whilst thou art tumbling on thy Bed, and crying, *O that this were to labour!* View the Wind and the Air, they are in motion: View the Waters, they stink and corrupt, unless running: nay view the dull earth, it is not so dull as thou art, it brings forth for the use of Man. *Go to the Ant thou*
- Prov. 6. 6.* *sluggard, yea any where, consider the ways of ant, save thy self, and be wise. What! a Professor; and yet guilty of an unnatural sinne? Nature puts all creatures into motion, and to provide for themselves: thou art worse than*
- 1 Tim. 5. 8.* *an Infidel: yea worse than a Beast: The poor Infant cannot suck without labour; and yet thou wouldst live without labour. God takes*
- 2 Thes. 3. 10.* *this so ill, that he would not have them to eat, who will not labour; and if we know such, we sin if we feed them. God hath not forbid meat to be given to any other sinners, only these are not to be fed, let them starve and die, if they will not labour. The sluggard*
- Prov. 26. 4.* *will not plow by reason of the cold, therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing: God hath no pity for drones, and he would not have*

have us to pity them : Drones are to be beaten out of the Hive, and starved in Winter : It is the Workman that is worthy of meat in *Mat.* Christs account : *Idleness hath brought much* 10. 10. *evil upon you*, and bred many in you, it begets many diseases in the body, but many more in the Soul : *it exempts a man from the* *Psal.* 91. *protection of Angels*, and it exposeth to Gods *II.* wrath : it brought ruine upon *Sodom*, and the Cities round about, and they are set forth *Jude* *for an example suffering the vengeance of eternal* *v. 7.* *fire.*

2. *How are we guilty of abundance of Idleness in our general callings?* And above all Idleness, Spiritual sloth is most dangerous. I find some, with unwearied diligence, labouring to enlarge their Possessions, and to raise their Posterity ; they rise early, and sit up late, and eat the bread of carefulness, but all is for the Body : they do little or nothing for their precious Souls, and for Eternity. Christ and Heaven stand by, and few regard them : Few work out their Salvation with fear and trembling. Some will not be at so much pains for their Souls, as to perform the common outward Duties of Religion. They will goe to the Market, or to be merry with Friends, many a mile ; but if a Lecture be but a few paces from their thresholds, they count it intollerable to wet their feet, to expose themselves to the air : Well, Well ; *God hath eased you of this labour.* But if men are for some easie parts of Religion, yet how few are for the difficult parts thereof ? They cannot

In their
general
callings.

The sins of Sodom found amongst us.

cannot endure to watch their hearts, to sanctifie the Lords day so strictly, as not to *think their own thoughts*, nor *speak their own words*, nor *do their own deeds*. How many Professours have so long given way to their lazy distempers, have lain so long upon the Bed of sloth, that *when we press them to any painful and laborious Duties*, they think it excuse enough, to say, *We have put off our Coat, and loth we are to put it on*: We have given way to sloth so long, that we hate to take pains for Christ, and for Eternity? Hence Self-examination, Meditation, Watchfulness against the first risings of sin, Mortification of inward heart-sins, &c. these works are totally laid by; and the longer we neglect them, the more ado there is to perswade us to take them up. We are like truant-Boyes, who hate their Book after a long vacation. All we have to uphold our selves with, is this, that the Spirit is willing, when God knows the contrary. We are willing to be rich, and therefore take pains: So we would in Spiritual things too, if we were so desirous of them. If we were willing to enjoy Christ in our Closets, would we be even asleep there upon our knees? If we were willing to know the way to Glory, would we not take so much pains, as to *goe to the Shepherds tents*, and *ask for the good old way*? "O! O! It will cut you to the heart, when you come to Hell-gate, that you mist of Heaven, for not enquiring the way thither; and that you took more pains to be rich, and
"to

“to damn your Souls, than to save them.
“Had that time been spent in Prayer, holy
“Conference, and in Self-arraignments,
“which was wasted in the Bed, Shop, Fields,
“unnecessarily, you might have had an e-
“ternal rest; whereas Hell will be, as in-
“tolerable to all, so especially to them, who
“have stood idle all the day long.

CHAP. XXIV.

Their Unmercifulness.

THE Fourth Sin of Sodom was this, Professors
Neither did she strengthen the hand unmerci-
of the poor and needy: That is, they fulness.
were unmerciful and inhumane. And *Exek.*
are not some Professours even in England *16. 49.*
very hard-hearted and cruel? I have oft
thought and said, That Our late Civil Wars
have had too great influence upon us, to make
us cruel. If there be among you a poor man,
of one of thy Brethren, within any of thy Gates, *Dent.*
in thy Land, which the Lord thy Gbd giveth *15. 7, 8.*
thee, thou shalt not harden thy heart, nor shut
thine hand from thy poor Brother; but thou shalt
open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely
lend him sufficient for his need, in that which Luke
he wanteth. O! The poor we have alwayes *14. 13.*
with

The sins of Sodom found amongst us.

- with us ! But, *When we make a Feast, do we call the poor ?* Who invites the Guests that Christ hath bid for our Tables ? When I consider how rare, *Bowells of mercy and kindness* are, it makes me fear (and I have Scripture-grounds for my fear) that few are the *Elect of God*. O hard-hearted Professours ! Hear *Jam. 2.* ye the Word of the Lord : *He shall have judgement without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy.* He shall have all judgement, pure judgement, without any mixtures of mercy, unmixed wrath shall be his portion : Christ is so resolved to punish the Unmerciful, that he will over-look any sinner, rather than him ; yea, for the greater honour of the Justice of God, *The Lord seems to begin and end the great Assizes with the Arraignment and Sentencing of the Unmerciful man.* How few com-
Mat. 9. passionate Professours are there ? The proper, vital act of Mercy, is Compassion. How few resent the miseries of others, as if they were their own ? How few set themselves to do good, to those who are miserable ? Such, what-ever they pretend, are indeed unmerciful ; for Mercy is an active, and a communicative thing. How few are merciful to others Souls ? How few pity, and set themselves to help sinning Souls ? (but more of this under another Head.) How few are merciful to the Bodies of others ? How many are there, that will not spare of their Superfluities, to cloth Christs naked shoulders, or to fill his hungry belly ? Men lay out more to adorn a Cup-board, or the walls of their houses,

houses, than ever they gave to Jesus Christ, and his Servants, all their dayes: Men can feed their Birds, their Catts, their Dogges, their Swine; but the Sucklings and Lambs of Jesus Christ perish for want: Christ tells you, what kindness you shew to his Spouse, his Friends, his Children, he counts as done unto himself: and believe it, all the scornes, and neglects you have cast on, either, his Ambassadors, or poor Saints, he will remember, another day. Go to thy Closet, and carry this with thee, *who so stoppeth his ear at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but Prov. shall not be heard.* If you give, to whom is 21. 13. it? Is it not only to the poor, of your own party? But hath not the Lord charged you, to give to every man that asketh? Hath he ex- Luke 6. cepted any, but idlers? Are not you to doe 30. good to all, though especially to the Household of Gal. 6. faith? And among them, should not your 10. greatest charity have been set forth on them, who are become poor, not by vile courses, but by Gods Providence, and for Conscience sake? But alas! how few can appeal to the heart-searching God concerning their mercifulness? How few (if destruction from God be any terrour to them) dare imprecate upon themselves, what Job did in case of unmercifulness? How few dare say to God, *If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the Widow to fail, or have eaten my morsel my self alone, and the Fatherless hath not eaten thereof, &c. If I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without* Job 31. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23. cover-

Their Injustice.

covering, &c. then let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone.

CHAP. XXV.

Their unrighteousness, or unfaithfulness in Trading.

Professors
miscarria-
ges in
Trading.
with re-
ference to
Buyers
and Sel-
lers.

A Las! Alas! Instead of Mercifulness, Behold Oppression, Violence, Deceit, Fraud, &c. This is a Lamentation, and should be for a Lamentation. Instead of giving to others that which is *our own*, we deny them that which is *their own*: Instead of letting goe our own right, and those dues, which in Justice others are bound to pay unto us; yea, instead of giving more of our own, to help them in their necessities, (which *Mercy* calls for, even not only not to require, what others owe us, when Providence hath dis-enabled them to pay us, but also to give them more to support their feeble state withall) behold *Injustice*, in propriety of speech. What defraudings is there one of another? How do men, not only take all advantages of their Brethren, to get what is due to them, as to seize on a Mortgage, when the Mortgage

gage-money cannot be paid, or to sue a bond, or turn a man out of his lease, when the day of payment is mist, &c. but also take advantage from the necessities of the poor to over-reach them, to get from them, either their houses or goods, to be sure what is not their own? Have not we *grinded the faces of the poor*? God will reckon for this speedily: Look over the Prophets, and see whether unmercifullness and unrighteousness ever went unpunished:

How few are there who mete to others, as they would have them to measure to themselves? The *rule of Christ*, whereby peace among men would be preserved, and much scandal prevented, is not heeded by us. We *do not deal with others, as we would be dealt with*, though Christ sayes unto us, *All things Mat. 7. whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them: for this is the Phil. 4. Law and the Prophets*, and though we are al- 8. so exhorted by the Apostle to follow what ever things are *true, and honest, and just, and pure, and lovely*. We are apt to follow a multitude to do evil, what the greater part of the world are wont to do, is the rule whereby we steer; hence we vary from that rule of righteousness, which the Lord hath prescribed: through the prevalency of self-love, through a covetous humour, we are loth to heed, what may any whit thwart a worldly interest.

How common, but cursed a principle is it, that every man may get for his wares, as much

As to Sellers, selling for as much as can be got.

as he can? Hence men take advantage of others necessities, or of their want of skill: Hence bad wares are put into mens hands for good wares, or else unreasonable demands are made to the prejudice of the buyer: would we be so dealt with?

Over-reaching those that trust.

When men depend upon our honesty and ingenuity to sell them a good pennyworth, *how common* is it with a glavering tongue, and seeming affection to our Neighbours good, to *over-reach him*, and cheat him, *though he re- poseth confidence in us?*

Asking more than they will accept.

How commonly do men demand a farr greater sum for their wares, than they will accept? Hereby they shew an oppressing mind, if their Customers would but comply with them. The *Quakers* will rise up in Judgement, to condemn this generation. Is it not a foul shame, that they by their light within (which at best is but the light of a natural Conscience) should exceed others, who pretend to an *higher principle*, even the light of Grace? But O! how do men mind *profit* more than *their own honour and reputation*, yea (which is more inexcusable) than the *reputation of Christ and his Gospel?* The name of God suffers, not so much when thou art *rotten heart-ed* in thy *Closet*, as it doth when thou art a *Cheater* in thy *Shop*. But wo and alas! Men are so set upon gain, that they can be contented to be voiced for Cheats and Confe- ners, so they may but greaten their Estates: This is a salve for their soar: they cannot be ignorant how the Gospel suffers, and how many

many prejudices are strengthned in the hearts of wicked men against Religion, by observing Professours unreasonable demands for their Wares, and yet they continue grievous exacters. Is it not matter of lamentation, that some profess, they had rather deal with a Turk, or with a Jew, than with such and such a Christian? And that they meet with fairer Quarter from Drunkards, &c. in their Trades, than from Precisians? By reason of you the Name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles. Wherein doth your Light shine before men? They cannot dive into your hearts, they can only discern your actions: They know not what your Love to God is, though you pretend much to knowledge, yet knowledge void of charity and honesty, is to them an abomination. Rom. 2. 24.

How few trade in fear, lest by getting an Estate, they lose God, and a good Conscience? When one told Latimer, That he was censured in paying for a Knife double to what it was worth, No, (said he) He hath not censured me, but his own Conscience. No wonder that Tradesmen complain of deadness in their Families and Closets, and impute it to their Callings, (and thereby charge God implicitly) Alas! it is not their Calling hath straitned and deadned their hearts towards God; but their oppression and deceit in their businesses, hath provoked God to leave them; and then they are, in the business of God, like a silly Dove, without an heart. Hath not God expressly charged you, Let no

Not fear-
ing Soul-
loses c-
ven in
their
gains.

1 Thes.
4. 6.

man goe beyond, or over-reach another in any matter, because that the Lord is the Avenger of all such? The vengeance of God is upon thee, in the straitness of thy Spirit in Duties, and without Repentance it will follow thee, till it hath laid thee in the Pit of Hell.

Ingross-
ing all
Trade.

How do men labour to ingross all Trade to themselves, by exclaiming against their Neighbours, and by under-selling them, at one time, that they may engage the Buyer to become their Customer, of whom they will surely fetch out their penny-worths, in the next bargain that is driven?

Boasting
of selling
too dear.

How do men boast of their selling their Commodities at such and such Rates, though their Consciences must needs suggest to them, that they have over-sold them, and therein have declined the rules of moderation and righteousness?

Loth to
make Re-
stitution.

When you have sold too dear, and so cheated your Brother, though Conscience, in times of sickness and danger, begins to contend with you about it, yet how loth are you to make restitution for the wrong you have offered? How unlike are you to them in Nehemiah? Then said they, We will restore them, and will require nothing of them; so will we do as thou sayest. If a Nehemiah should say, So

Nehem.
5. 12,
13.

God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise, even thus be he shaken out and emptied, you would hardly say Amen, and praise the Lord.

When

When men buy a Commodity, how apt are they to discommend it, to bring down the price, to say, *It is naught*, when all the while they know it is offered on easie terms? How do Buyers take the Advantage of the Seller's Ignorance of the worth of his own Goods? There is a *curst* Proverb amongst English-men, but in too great request, That a man may not only sell as dear, but buy as cheap as he can. Few like Austin, that bought a Book, at an unskilful Stationer's hands, for an inconsiderable price, and afterwards gave the value of it. *Bread of deceit is sweet to a man, but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel.* 20. 17.

How often do Buyers (even as Sellers often say, they will not, they cannot take a penny less for such a Commodity, so) answer, that they will not give a farthing more, for what they have cheapened, and yet all the while intend to come up to the Seller's price?

How common is it, for men to take up Wares, and to promise payment at such a day, and yet fail? Yea, how do they promise, though they know they shall not be able to be as good as their word? It were better for thee to begg thy bread, than thus to steal from thy Neighbour. Thou art ashamed to begg, as he of old: thou shouldst be ashamed much more to do worse, viz. to defraud thy Neighbour. *The getting of treasures by a lying tongue, is a vanity, tossed to and fro of them that seek death: It is a thing very* Prov. 21. 6.

frequent, tossed to and fro, but it is a vanity, and they that live it are *Felones de se*, they do but seek death and destruction by it.

As to Buyers and Sellers both. *How few are there, that in their buying and selling, give a proof of their loving their Neighbours as themselves, their Neighbours goods and welfare as their own?*

1 Pet. 1. 15. *"O! When will ye be holy in all manner of conversation? Holy in your Trades, as well as in your Church-Assemblies? Holy in the Shop, and in all secular employments? So holy, as to abide with God in your Calling? When will ye trade for God, rather than for Self? When will ye labour*

Eph. 4. 28. *with your hands, that ye may be able to give, and not only to receive? When will ye trade in fear, and be in the fear of the Lord all the day; and that, lest your Shop should prove your bane; and whilst seeking after the Mammon of this life, ye lose the true Substance? Is this thy Prayer before thou enterest upon thy Calling? (O that it were! Lord help me to trade for thee, whilst for my self; and for the good of my Neighbours Soul, Body, Goods, as well as for my own.*

With reference to the King, Stealing Customs. *How few, among all the several sorts of Traders, render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's? Hierome long since hath told you, That Caesar is not Proper, but Appellative. All the Emperours were called Caesars, from Julius Caesar.*

Considerations. *How can you quiet your Consciences to Real Custome, as many of you do? What is it*

it, *save the Law, that gives you right to all you have?* And by the *Law*, so much of your Goods is the *King's*: it is alienated from you to his Crown and Revenue: How dare you cheat him? Should you think it hard measure to pay so great a tribute? *Have you forgot what Christ (who came under the Law) did?* *Mat. 17.* Though tribute was exacted of him, when the Children were free, yet he would work a *Miracle*, rather than give offence, in denying to pay the Fine, that was imposed on him. *Why do ye not take the safest course, if it be a disputable matter?* To be sure you will not give offence to God, to the King, to your Conscience, by paying Customs; but you may to all by defrauding. *Do you herein as you would be dealt with?* If you were the Head, would you have the inferiour Members impoverish the Head? If you were the Political Father, would you have your Children cheat you? *Do not you by bribes and otherwise, tempt the King's Officers to be false to their trust, and to damn their Souls by perjury and treachery?*

Lastly, Consider, that self-love, and self-interest are prevalent, as to make you to favour and enrich your selves, so also to bribe your minds and judgements, and to enslave them to your base passions. O! Consider how apt is every one unequally to favour himself, and to suck in any corrupt and absurd reasonings, whereby he may greaten himself; though by the ruine of others? If you say (as they of the Silver-shrines, *This brings in our gain*)

We cannot subsist without stealing Customs: How else can we live? A Father will tell you, *Indigna vox Christiano*, &c. *It ill becomes a Christians mouth, to ask, How shall I live?* Not one that Christ call'd to forsake Trades and Professions, did ever answer him, I must not give over my gain: They only reformed, or relinquished their Trades, when Christ call'd them. Till you can relinquish unlawful gains, you are none of Christs Disciples. Those in the *Acts*, that burnt their unlawful Books, to the loss of thousands, shewed themselves true Converts, so mightily grew the Word and prevailed. O! When Tyre shall be converted, her trading and dealings shall be sacred, *Her merchandise, and her hire shall be holiness to the Lord.*

Acts

19. 20.

Isa.

23.

18.

Their
Lying.

V. Pa-
trick's
Epitome
of Mans
Duty.
P. 45,
46.

Here give me leave to add the Sin of *Lying*, too too common among all sorts of Traders, as well as others. And truly this Sin comes not improperly under the Head of Injustice. *Justice*, even when it is not taken most largely, (so it is taken for all Religion) comprehends our whole duty to our Neighbour, as to matters of right: Thus, by vertue of the *fifth* Commandement, to do justly, is to give our Parents their due honour, whether they be *Natural*, *Civil*, or *Spiritual*: In respect of the *sixth*, it is to preserve the Life of our Neighbour, and to have a care, that we injure him not in his beeing: In reference to the *seventh*, it is to preserve his just Relations, and not touch them,

them, or cause the violation of their faith to
to him: in reference to the *eighth*, it is to
preserve his estate, and not meddle with his
goods; the *ninth* requires that we preserve
his good name, and not defame him, nor do
any prejudice to his credit, no more than we
would to his estate: and by vertue of the
tenth, we are to moderate our very desires, so
as not to envy him that which is his, nor to long
to have it in our possession. To be sure there
is righteousness to be look'd after in words
and expressions, as well as in deeds and actions.
But alas! *How doth the sin of lying abound among us?*—(And no wonder when
Perjury is so common a sinne) for this God *Hos. 4.*
hath a controversie with the Land. Is there *1, 2.*
not need to take heed every one of his Neigh-
bour, and not to trust in any Brother? will not *Jer. 2.*
every one deceive his Neighbour, and not *4, 5.*
speak the truth? Have not they taught their
tongue to speak lies? If you are not couzening-
lyers, or false-witness-lyers, yet are you not
reviling-lyers? Do you not upon every petty
difference speak of one another ye care not
what? do ye not spread lying defamati-
ons? I heard the defaming of many ----- re- *Jer. 20.*
port say they, and we will report. Is not the *10.*
fawning-lyer common among us? Their words
are the words of *Jacob*, but their hands are
the hands of *Esau*. The words of their mouths *Psal. 55.*
are smoother than butter, but warr is in their *21.*
hearts: their words are softer than oyl, yet are
they drawn swords: there is no faithfulness in
their mouth, their throat is an open sepulcher.
Upon

- Upon this occasion give me leave to use David's Prayer, *Help Lord, for the godly man ceaseth, for the faithful fail from among the Children of men.* Why, wherein consists their ungodliness? *they speak vanity every one with his Neighbour: with flattering lips, and with a double heart do they speak.* Is there not also many a *News-telling-lyer* among us? They believe in their Consciences, that it is false, what they relate; and yet, to promote an interest, for to make hearts glad with lyes, they will spread that which is false. How many *officious-lyers* have we, who tell lyes for some good end (as they think?) The highest end is Gods glory; but will ye speak wickedly for God, and talk deceitfully for him?
- Joh. 13. The Vulgar reads the Text, Numquid Deus indiget vestro mendacio?* It contains a truth, though not the sense of the place: *What! hath God need of your lye?* It is a dishonour to God to be thus help'd. And if we must not speak evil, that good may come to God, sure then we may not (whatever the Roman Doctors teach us) speak evil, that good may come to our selves.

How can you think you are Gods Children? God engageth himself for his people, that surely they will not lye, surely they are my people, children that will not lye. Austin long agoe gave his judgement concerning lying, that a man must not tell a lye to save the whole world: if it were (saith he) to save thy Father or thy Mother out of Hell, if possibly it could be, thou must not tell a lye, or if it were to save

Considerations,
against
Lying.

Isa. 63.
8.

a Kingdom from destruction: And yet to gain a little mirth, or to gain a penny, or to prevent the frowns of a Superiour, how do some teach their tongues to lye? Not considering, that among the seven things that are an *Prov. 6.* abomination to the Lord, lying is one, yea, *17.* (as one observes) he repeats lying twice, though under several names: that all liers *Rev. 21.* shall have their portion in the burning lake: that *8.* herein they are like unto the Devil, who is the *Tit. 1.2.* Father of lyes, and most unlike unto God, who cannot lye. O then! put away lying, and *Eph. 4.* speak the truth; away with mental reservati- *25.* ons, and Jesuitical equivocations. Let thy tongue be the faithful interpreter of thy heart. Be faithful in your promises and engagements, be not yea and nay. Remember Cicero the Heathen's saying: None but the most villanous will deceive him, who had been safe, if he had not trusted.

CHAP. XXVI.

Their Covetousness.

IF there be so much *unrighteousness*, no Professors wonder that there is also much *covetousness*. Covetousness that must not be forgot, when we remember the evil of our ways. Covetousness is the

1 Tim.

6. 10.

V. Wells

on

Mich. 6.

8. P. 18.

Mat.

21. 38.

Ecclef.

6. 2.

Prov.

30. 15.

the seed of all unrighteousness, *the root of all evil*. It was *Jezebel's* covetousness that made her unjustly deprive *Naboth* of his Vineyard. *This is the heir, come let us kill him, and seize on his inheritance. Flectere si nequeo Supplex, acheronta movebo*, If I cannot prevail with Heaven, I will to Hell for an Estate is the voice of covetousness: yea (which is more sadly to be considered) this is that which will put men, not only upon *injustice* to others, but to *God himself*; it will make them offer violence to *Religion*, to *Divine honour*, and whatever is sacred in the world, all these shall be prostituted to serve the ends of covetousness. That man will stick at no abuse of God, whose *God* is his *gain*. How notorious was that of one of the *holy fathers* of *Rome*, a *Pope*, *O quantas divitias peperit hac fabula Christi!* O how gainfull unto us hath been the fable of *Christ*! And is not covetousness and earthly mindedness an *Epidemical* sinne? *Solomon* calls it an *evil disease*. 'Tis called by one *Aurugo*, the yellow jaundise, which makes the sick person look yellow all over. This is the *Grave* which never saith, *it is enough*, but like *Solomon's* Horse-leech it cries *give, give*. O! what boundless appetites have many, who can neither use what they have, nor put a period to what they desire: as in the Sea one wave riseth above another, so here every desire of having is out-gone by a new desire of getting.

Are not your great cares for riches? Do not your thoughts thus run out, O! how shall I thrive more in the world, get more estate, custom? but not, O! how shall I get the favour of God, the pardon of my sins, and victory over my lusts? how anxious and solicitous are you, every day for the world, but how flat in your coming to have the Image of God renewed? How desisted are you when you miss of a good bargain? or when you meet with some loss by Sea or Land? But how little troubled if you lose an opportunity of communion with the Lord? How joyous are you when a little of the world comes in? but how little pleas'd with the galleries, wherein the beloved may be held? How are men pleas'd with the earth, but find no more relish in Christ and his ways, than in the white of an egge? What great journeys have you taken, even compassed Sea and Land, to gain riches? And hardly can go a mile or two to meet with God? How is every opportunity laid hold of to get more to the heap? But do not you remain contented, with the least measures of grace, yea with somewhat below grace? How oft have you left your meat to serve a Customer? but when so, to serve the Lord Jesus Christ? How few design for riches, as a means to carry them to a further end? They should be but as the rounds of a Ladder, not to stand upon, but thereby to ascend higher, even to glory, and to the new Hierusalem: But alas! few desire the world in subordination to God, and as a means to glorifie God; but the more they

Evidenced in several particulars,

Their Covetousness.

they love the World, the less God is loved; and the more their desires are carried out after riches, the less after God. *How few pursue earthly things in obedience to Gods call? How many out of a delire of filthy lucre? How few seek the World with an holy indifference? How few reserve their zeal, and not-tiret endeavours, for heavenly things? Is not the general cry, Who will shew us any good? We need no proof of this, there are instances every where. How, for the getting of a penny, will some debarr themselves of Ordinances? Is it not a sufficient excuse with some, for not attending on the Worship of God, that they met with a Customer, that kept them from the Ordinance? Doth not the Clock strike too fast, whilst thou art selling to advantage? Doth not time run away too fast? Dost thou not wish thou couldst with Joshuab cause the Sun to stand still on a Marker-day, or on a Fair-day, when trading is quick? But O! The Sexton is blamed for suffering the Clock to stand still on a Sabbath day, and when thou art in the Worship of God, O! When will the Sabbath be gone? When will the Duty be over, that we may sell? How many Hypocritical out-cries are there against the World? O! It eats up my time: O! It eats up my spirits: It robs me of communion with God: We say it is an Enemy, and yet we can bosome this Snake, lodge this Enemy, that God would have us to kill. Mortise*

Psa. 4. 6.

Note.

Amos 8. 5.

Col. 3. 5.

Covetousness.

How

How oft hath God charged thee against Covetousness? Take heed and beware of it: TWO Considerations to words to the same purpose, all little enough withdraw to take thee off from earthly pursuits. *How* the heart from Covetousness apparently hath God with-drawn from thee, ever since thou wast taken with this Dalilah? *How* Luke and miry clay, to Duty, much more to God? 12. 15. And wilt thou be rich? Art thou resolved to run into the bryars? Then farewell to thee, not only in time, but to eternity. *How many* Mat. convictions and impressions of the blessed Spirit 13. 23. have your worldly cares choaked? How have your inordinate desires of riches puzzled your Souls, and diverted them from minding and improving the counsells of God and Conscience? But O! *How unreasonable* are earthly prosecutions in this day of Gods wrath; When God is plucking up by the roots, now to be seeking great things for our selves, to have Baruck's sore running on us, this makes us Jer. 45. the more inexcusable sinners. This is altogether unseasonable, this is no time for it, this is ignoble, yea base. O that we were ashamed of it! We say, *The last dayes* are perillous dayes; we pretend to expect the Cross, and is this good preparation for the Cross of Christ, to load our selves with thick clay, to crack our Consciences, and thereby to incur Gods farther displeasure? *How unlike* art thou to the primitive Converts? Paul, when converted, counts all things but dung in comparison of Christ. And Zachens no sooner had a work of grace begun upon him, but down

- down went the World, faster than ever it went up: He parts from riches with more freedome than he sought them: *The half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have wronged any man, I will restore four-fold.*
- Luke** 19. 8. *John*, the beloved Disciple, affirms, That there is an inconsistency between loving the
- 1 John** 2. 15. *Father*, and the *World*; and that *Whosoever is born of God, overcometh the World*: But
- 1 John** 5. 4. alas! Our hearts are as Cities without walls; the World hath a thorow-fare in them, and may come and goe without any Pass from Heaven. How hath God put a remark of his sore displeasure upon our worldly endeavours? We have, to dwell in our seiled houses, neglected Gods house, and said, *The time is not come for the building the waste places*, for the restoring the Worship of God, for the building of the house of God; and how hath God caused many of us to vomit up our sweet morsels, which we rolled under our tongues? O! Consider your wayes: Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; and he that earneth wages, earneth wages to put it into a bagg with holes. How hath this Sin deadned you to all the Worship of God? How, by the interposition of this dark body of the Earth, hath the light of Heaven, yea the light of Gods countenance, been darkned? and how hath thy Soul been benighted and clouded? They say, If a Knife be put into the Earth, it will lose its edge: I am sure of this experiment, That
- Christians;

Christians, who were once lively and active for God, yet by engaging their hearts to the World, they have lost their zeal, their keenness, and their lustre, which once they had. When thou hast gained time from thy business to think of God, and to discharge duty, hast not thou miss'd thine heart? hast not thou left and lost it in the crowd? *How dost thou debase thyself hereby?* The curse of *Cham* is upon thee, a *servant of servants thou art*, a slave to that which thou shouldst rule over: God did not give thee a reasonable Soul, that thou shouldst choose the *Serpents curse*, to crawl and live upon the Earth. O! What fordid practises have some stoop'd unto, for the getting this Worlds riches? *Ahab*, to gain a few handfulls of earth, dares walk to it through *Naboth's* bowells. *Judas*, to pocket thirty Pieces, will venture to betray his Lord, and the Lord of Heaven and Earth. O! tremble to think what sad effects your Covetousness may have upon you before you dye. *Demas* left Christ, lost his Soul, shipwreck'd his faith, and all to embrace this present evil world. And if thou make hast to be rich, shalt thou be innocent? Whether thou place thy confidence and hope in thy gold, or in a golden calf, thou art guilty of *Idolatry*, of having other Gods besides the true God, and so dost as highly offend the true God: and God usually gives up such men unto spiritual judgements. It makes me fear you have not tasted of the upper springs, because the puddle of the World is still sweet to your

Prov.

28. 20.

Col. 3. 5.

Rom. I.

21. 24.

R

taste.

Luke
5. 39.

Gal. 6.
14.

Psa. 84.
10.

Mat. 6.
24.

Si terram
amas ter-
ra es.
Aug.

1 Tim.
6. 9.

taste. *No man* (saith Christ) *having drunk old wine, straightway desireth new, for he saith, the old is better.* If you had tasted of the joy, peace, mercy, and comforts of Christ, your earthly comforts would be disrelished: If you did glory in the Cross of Christ, the World would be crucified to you, and you unto the World. The sweetness of Christ would drown all Creature-sweetness. But alas! To which of us, is one day in Gods Courts better than a thousand else-where? Austin said, If one drop of the joyes of Heaven might fall into Hell, it would drown all the bitterness of Hell: So would it drown all bitterness in the Soul, and all the sweetness in the World. Worldly comforts would be too course, too flat, too low to recreate your hearts. Did ye but know the honey and milk of Canaan, ye would not so much mind the Onyons of Egypt. *No man can serve two Masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or he will cleave to the one, and despise the other: ye cannot serve God and Mammon.* O! What a surpassing indignity is this to Christ, to set him below the foot-stool, to value thirty Pieces of Silver before him, to prefer Earth before Heaven, present things before future; that the love of God, the recompence of reward, shall not lye nearer the heart, than the treasures of Egypt? O! What a miserable life dost thou live? This Sin brings an Hell with it: thou art the Devil's Martyr. *They that will be rich, fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish*
and

and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. Thou enjoyest neither God, nor the World: Thy only happiness is a fancy: And this is thy great misery, that thou still desirest that which will never satisfy thy delires; The more thou hast of the World, the more thou wastest: the more thou drinkest, the more thou thirstest: a Dropsey is upon thee, and thou knowest it not. Discontent is alwayes the Companion of Covetousness. *Semper avarus eger.* Let your conversation be without covetousness: and be content with such things as you have. *Hor.* Why wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? *Hebr.* Grace and Godliness is substance: Why, with Esop's Dogg, wilt thou let goe the substance for a shadow? *13. 5. Prov. 23. 5.* The things of the World are fancies; the things of God realities. *ch. 8. 21. Eccles.* What good is there to the Owners of riches, saving the beholding them with their eyes? *5. 1.* Do not you all this while bear false witness against God; Do not you proclaim to the World, that God is not enough to answer, to fill your desires, and that therefore you goe out after the Creature? Is it nothing to you, to call God, who is all-sufficient, who is a fountain of living Water, a barren Wilderness? Be astonished, O ye Heavens, at this; and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the Lord; for my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisternes, broken cisternes, that can hold no water, O Generation, see ye the Word of the Lord; Have I been a Wil-
Jer. 2.
12, 13
31.

- derness unto Israel? a Land of Darknes? Wherefore say my people, We are Lords, we will come no more unto thee? Hereby you break the conjugal Relation: God looks on you as*
- James* *Adulterers and Adulteresses, and will judge*
- 4. 4.* *you accordingly. God expects that his breasts*
- Prov. 5.* *should satisfie you, and that you be alwayes ra-*
- 19.* *vished with his love: and dare you tell the*
- World, that your God hath deceived you? and that you were mistaken in your choice of*
- God? and therefore after other Lovers you*
- will goe? No wonder, that for the iniquity*
- Isa. 57.* *of our covetousness, God be wroth, and smite*
- 17.* *us. We are greedy of more, but what have*
- we done with our former talents? Account we*
- Mat.* *must for one, for two, for ten talents: the*
- 25. 5.* *more we have, the greater still will be our*
- account. There is a reckoning day at hand.*
- Phil. 4. 5* *O that our moderation were known to all men,*
- because the Lord is at hand. If thou art not*
- sincere, I am as sure as this Book is in thy*
- hand, thou wilt curse the time that ever*
- thou hadst an Estate, and wilt wish thou hadst*
- been a Beggar, for then thou hadst not so*
- much to answer for before God. It is cer-*
- tain (though some doubt it) that thou shalt*
- 1 Tim.* *carry none of thy estate away with thee; nothing*
- 6. 7.* *is to be carried away, save guilt, to Hell;*
- in case of mis-improvement of an Estate; yea,*
- if you have not rendred unto God according*
- 2 Chron.* *to what you have received, the heaping up of*
- 32. 25.* *wealth, is but the charging of thy account:*
- thou must account, how thou hast disbursed*
- to a farthing. I will suppose thou hast (by*
- neg.*

neglects of thy general Calling, and by rising up early, and sitting up late) gained an Estate, *thou mayest put all thy gain in thine eyes, and never see the worse.* What will thy Estate advantage thee, when the Arrows of the Lord enter into thy Soul? What will the World advantage thee, when the Gout, Feaver, burning Pestilence, &c. are upon thee? What, hast thou got only that which may stand with Gods eternal hatred? Never count thy gains, till thou hast got that which is inconsistent with Gods wrath. What hast thou got, above that which God throweth unto the *Doggs*; Shew me Childrens bread, or never boast of thy gains. Did you ever find any Child of God worse for afflictions? but *have you not found many worse for their thrivings in the World?* *Jeshurun waxed fat, Dcut. and kicked.* Whilst you have Bonds and 32.15. Bills upon others, do not you run into arrears unto God? And how will you discharge those Suits, which God will commence against you? *When you lye a dying, will ye not wish, that your time, your strength, your spirits, had been powred forth upon better things, than those of this life?* That you had traded for Grace and Glory, rather than for the Gold of *Ophir*, for a little gilt Clay? O ye great Projectours for the World, I do even fore-see the troubles and horrors, the doubts and fears, the anguish and amazements of your Souls, which your uncertainties, as to your future estate, will put you into, in your dying Rooms. *How will you*
R 3
take

Their Covetousness.

Psal.
69. 6.

Prov.
II. 4.

take up such language as this ; “ Fool that I
 “ was, to cumber my self about many things,
 “ and neglect the one thing necessary ! Fool
 “ that I was , to set my thoughts and affecti-
 “ ons on things *below* , (none of which now
 “ give me a drop of water to cool my tongue)
 “ and to neglect the things *above* ! O ! If I
 “ had never heard of Christ and Glory , I
 “ had been more excusable for my earthly
 “ prolings. O ! *How have I disquieted my*
 “ *self in vain ? I have heaped up riches , and*
 “ *know not who shall gather them.* Had I been
 “ as faithful to Christ , as I was to Mammon ,
 “ O ! with what joy might I have removed
 “ hence ? What *abundant entrance into the*
 “ *everlasting Kingdome* might I have had ?
 O ! Labour to prevent the horrors of Death,
 and the gnawing Worm of Conscience. *It is*
sad , when the Sting of Death , and the Worm
Conscience , bite the man together. Riches a-
 vail not in the day of wrath : but righteousness
 delivereth from death. Believe it, it will cut
 you to the heart , to think , that less pains
 might have served for eternal Life , than you
 have bestowed for temporal Goods. *This*
plague attends the covetous man , the more he
desires , and heaps up , the less he is desired ,
and the less he is lamented when he dyes. He
 is like a Swine , that is good for nothing ,
 whilst he is alive ; not good to bear and carry ,
 as the Horse ; nor to draw , as the Oxe ; nor
 to cloath , as the Sheep ; nor to give milk ,
 as the Cowe ; nor to keep the house , as the
 Dogg ; but *ad solam mortem nutritur* , fed
 only

only to the slaughter: So the covetous man doth no good with his riches whilst he liveth; but when he is dead, his riches come to be disposed of. *The riches of a sinner are laid up Prov. for the just. How can you choose but tremble 13.22. at Dooms-day?* You cannot desire the coming of Christ: If the Church cries, *Come Lord Jesus, come quickly*, you cannot joy in that Prayer, for that your hearts are glued to this present World: You prefer *Paris* before *Paradise*. It is to the Saints loss, to be kept so long from Heaven; but you count it not so. You cannot say, *Thy Kingdom come*. What will you do in that day, when all the Estate and Friends of *Dives* cannot relieve with a drop of cold water? Riches are like *bryars* and *thornes*, good to stop gaps, but not to lay in our beds, and set our hearts upon, lest we lye down in sorrow. Few remember the Devil's offer, (*All these things will I give thee*, is the last temptation that old Professours are baited with.) Take heed therefore and beware of Covetousness.

CHAP. XXVII.

Their Envy.

ENVY is a Sin seldome confessed, but Professors yet much diffused among Professours. *James The Spirit that dwelleth in us, lusteth to Envy. 4. 5.*

And indeed *Covetousness* and *Envy* are never afunder: they are sins against the same command: Such as long, that what is their Neighbours, should be theirs, envy to him that which is his: and such as envy to him that which is his, long to have it to be theirs. How desirous are Professours to grasp all to themselves? And therefore how apt are the very best to be envious at the power, greatness, riches, if not goodness of others? Doth not the experience that you have of your own hearts (if you be not strangers at home) testifie, that this Spirit is stirring and acting in you? The poor envy the rich, the base the honourable, as if they had the less, because others have so much. Some think that this was the sin that threw down the Angels from Heaven, that they envied *Adam's* glory, in that he was made after Gods image, and that they relinquished their glory to divest *Adam* of his: To be sure, the Devil was restless, till he had plunged *Adam* in the same sin and misery, that he was brought into. Sure, maligning the prosperity of others, is not from the Spirit of God. He that giveth freely to all, would not have us to envy those, to whom he gives more freely, than to our selves; and he that giveth us more, doth not envy us for what we have. If you have not so much as others, it is because you are unfit to receive, not because God is unwilling to give. Do not we see how this poyson diffuseth it self? An early sin it was, if not in the

the Angels, (as some think) yet it was in *Eve*: She envied the all-knowledge of God, and must forsooth have at least an equality with God himself: It was also strong in the first man, that was born of a woman: and we still suck it in with our Mothers milk, and it seldome dyes till we dye. This sinne is commonly among people of the same Profession: One Mechanick envies another, one Merchant another, one Scholar another, one Gentleman another, one Commander another, as *Saul* envied and hated *David*, because the Women sang, that *Saul slew his thousands*, and *David his ten thousands*, one Minister another, as those in *Paul's* dayes, that envied him, and affected an high strain of eloquence, on purpose to obscure that reputation which *Paul* had got among the Churches. And happy had it been, if this cursed sinne had dyed in that age, but it hath been still working in all ages of the World.

Is there not a greater promptitude in us, to Evidently detract from mens worth, than to credit and exalt them? To write down their blots and imperfections, than to set forth their due vertues and graces? If we cannot reach others by imitation, we will by calumny; and therefore *Luther* saith, Envious men feed upon the dung of other men: They are like flies, that love to be upon sores. It is admirable to see, how dull sighted we are, as to the vertues and graces of our Brethren, but quick sighted as Eagles to discern their im-

Mat. 7. imperfections: The *beams* of Vertue are not
 3. seen, i. e. not taken notice of, but a *mote* in a
 Brother's eye is soon espyed.

Readiness
 to receive
 and
 spread de-
 famations. *Are we not more greedy to receive and spread
 anything, whereby our Neighbour is infamed
 and obscured, than we are to entertain and dis-
 fuse what tends to his praise and glory? And is
 not this the reason hereof, viz. the great
 desire we have to shine alone, and that we
 would none to vye with us in glory, much
 less to excell us therein?*

Gladness
 in their
 being
 brought
 lower. *Is there not (oft-times) a secret gladness in
 our hearts; when some sad Providences afflict
 others, in their Names, Goods, Health, and
 Relations, that thereby they may be brought to a
 level with us, or to an inferiority, in a lower
 estate? When you have seen some Congre-
 gation wedged in with a concourse of hea-
 rers, and yours thin and naked; and when
 some have been cryed up for their purity,
 gravity, activity, and zeal; and when o-
 thers have greatened their parts, or estates,
 and yours rather have been impaired, have
 ye not been ready even to burst with Envy?
 Have you not been glad, when some blot
 hath attended these, whereby they have fal-
 len in that esteem, which once they had a-
 bove you?*

Disliking
 their own
 enjoy-
 ments. *There is no Envy in God, and his holy
 Angels: they rejoyce at our advancement,
 and at the glory of the humane Nature, that
 it is so exalted above theirs; but unhappy
 we! that cannot see any excellency in ano-
 ther, but we dislike our own enjoyments, and
 are*

are more vexed at the welfare of our Neighbours, than we would be at our own calamities.

The *Beasts* do not envy one another, but Men do: yea, the *Devils* envy not one another: some Professours are herein worse than Devils. No wonder if there have been *hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, and heresies*, whilst *envyings* have abounded amongst us. You know the miserable effect of Envy in the first man, that was born of a woman: through Envy Cain hated, and then kill'd his Brother Abel. *Wrath is cruel, and Anger outrageous*, but who is able to stand before Envy? This is so filthy, so shameful a sin, that few will own it: Observe the confessions of men in Prayer, and Conference, and you will hardly find a Professour acknowledge Envy. The malignity of this sin appears, in that it strikes directly at the Providence of God, who disposeth of the inequality of mens conditions, according to his sovereignty and wisdom: It hath a tacit accusation of God, for raising up some so high, and laying others so low: It is deeply unsatisfied with Gods bounty to the Children of men, that he gives so liberally to some, whereas he is not bound to any. Whilst others complain against God, for making the World no better, the envious man is troubled, that he hath done so well, for some of his Creatures. No wonder the Apostle reckoneth Envy among the gross sins of Murder, Uncleanness, Idolatry, Witchcraft,

Considerations to withdraw the heart from Envy.

Gal. 5.

20.

Prov.

27. 4.

Gal. 5.

19, 20,

21.

craft, &c. and concludes, Heaven is no place for such. *They which do such things, shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* This is a sin so damnable, and so ugly, making you so much like the Devil, that it is high time you watch against it, mourn for it, and seek its ruine. "O! When shall we hear the Exhortation, *Let us not be desirous of vain-glory, provoking one another, envying one another?* When shall we in honour prefer one another? When shall we, like Barnabas, *When we see the grace of God, rejoyce?* When shall Ministers reprove the *Joshuahs*, that are envying for their sakes, in *Moses* words, *I would to God all the people of the Lord did prophesie?* When shall we like *John the Baptist*, be contented to decrease, so that *Christ* may increase? and to be laid by, if others more able may be substituted to do Gods work? When shall we rejoyce if God useth others to convert by them, more than by us? and with famous *Mr. Dod*, I would to God (saith he) that I were the worst Minister in *England*: his meaning was, that all should excel him in gifts and graces. We pretend to evidences of our conversion from our love to the Saints, but let us hear what the effects of true love are: *Love seeketh not her own, love envieth not, love is not puffed up.* As love is the fulfilling of the Law, so envy is the dissolution of it. O! when shall we instead of envying our Brother, bless God for him? If he hath more than we

AAs

11. 23.

1 Cor.

13. 4, 5.

“we have, more strength, parts, riches,
 “honours, graces, &c. the account he
 “must pass with God is the greater: let us
 “pity him rather than envy him: Believe it,
 “God is wiser than we are, and if his di-
 “stributions are various, we have as many
 “talents as we can well improve. Let us
 “look to our own duty in the places wherein
 “God hath set us; and pray for them, that
 “have ten tallents more than we have, that
 “they may serve the Lord ten times more
 “than we can. O that thine eye might affect
 “thine heart, that thine eye should be evil
 “because Gods is good.

CHAP. XXVIII.

The sins of Family-Governours.

1. **H**OW guilty are such of you, as have fa-
 milies to govern, of not commanding
 your household to serve God? Of how few can
 God say, as he did of Abraham by way of
 approbation, *I know him, that he will com-
 mand his children and his household after him,
 and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to
 justice and judgement, that the Lord may
 bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken* Gen. 18.
 of him. By your Authority you should com-
 mand

Profes-
 sours mis-
 carriages
 in their
 Families,
 As Go-
 vernours,
 Not com-
 manding
 their
 household
 to serve
 God.

The sins of Family Governours.

mand them to subject their hearts, wills, and consciences, to the will and pleasure of *fe-hovah*; but alas! how many of you have been catelets in this? your Children and Servants, yea Wives, must know your Authority upon worldly accounts, you command them (im-
periously enough) to fulfill your will and pleasure, to serve you; but how *Gallio-like* are you, little caring whether they obey the Lord?

Being
Zealous
against
disobedi-
ence to
them-
selves, not
to God.

2. *How much passion have you discovered when Children, and Servants, yea and Wives too, submit not to your will and pleasure? But when do they see so much Zeal against their neglects of Gods work, as they find in you, when they neglect your secular commands?* These passions are of a scandalous nature, and may make your inferiours to believe, that you value more ~~your~~ Authority, than Gods, the having your own will to be obeyed, than that Gods requiries should be observed.

Not ca-
ring for
the Souls
of their
Families.

3. *How many Professing-Governours are there, that shew great care for the bodies of their Families, but not for their Souls? Meat, and drink, and clothes, or money to buy them, they shall have, but none, or little, instruction.*

Not Cha-
teaching
them.

How little do you Chatechise your Families? How seldome do you ask them any questions concerning the first Principles of the Doctrine of Christ? If you do Chatechise your Children, as you ought in obedience to those Divine commands: Train up a Child in the way wherein he should go. Bring up your Chil-
dren.

Heb. 6.
I.
Prov.
22. 6.

children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Ephes.
 Yet how few of you do Chatechise the rest of 6. 4.
 your household, your *Servants* and *Wives*,
 though they be but *Babes in Religion*, *Chil-* Heb. 6.
children in Understanding, and this *Milk* is ap- 1.
 pointed for *Children in Understanding* as well
 as *Age*? Neither doth the work of Chate-
 chising them, belong only unto *Ministers* (to
 them indeed it doth belong as such as *watch* Heb. 13.
 for their *Souls*) but unto *you*; for it belongs 17.
 to all that have the charge of *Souls*, and you
 are charged not only with your *Children's*,
 but with your *Servant's*, and with your *Wives*
Souls. Whatever any of you may fancy,
 there never comes a *Wife*, a *Child*, or *Ser-*
vant into any of your *Families*, but with this
 warrant from the great Lord of Heaven and
 Earth; *keep the Soul of this Wife, this Child,*
this Servant; for if it be missing amongst the
 number of my sheep at the great day through
 thy neglect in instructing, &c. thy *Soul* shall go
 for it. Hence not only should your *Chil-*
dren be taught by you, but your *Wives* and
Servants. The *Wife* is commanded to *learn*
 of her *Husband at home*, and the *Husband* to
 walk with her as a man of knowledge: and
 your *Servants* should be trained by you in Re- Gen. 14.
 ligion, as *Abraham's Servants* were by *Abra-* 14.
ham, thus some of the *Hebrew Rabbins* think
 that *Abraham's trained Servants* are therefore
 so called.

Not con-
 versing
 personal-
 ly with
 them a-
 bout their
 Souls;

How seldom do you converse personally with
 every one in your *Families* concerning the prac-
 tical part of Religion? How seldom do you
 ask Souls;

ask them any questions, how it is with their Souls? and what they think will become of them to all Eternity? Are you not as great strangers to the inwards of their Souls, as you are to the Souls of the *Indians*? If their bodies be in danger, meat, physick, attendance are procured; but their Souls may perish in formality and carelessness for any help you will afford them. Some Professing-Governours never treat with their households about their Spiritual Estate from one year to another: Hence comes the great Apostasy of our times. The Lord humble us, and deliver us from bloud-guiltiness. Many an Husband may cry out, O my Wife's Soul is like to perish, through my default: many a Parent may shriek, O! I am verily guilty of the bloud of my Child: and many a Master may impute to his own account all the disorders of his Servants; for that they have no personal conference with them about Original Corruption, Regeneration, Justification, Sanctification, Glorification, &c. Perhaps thou prayest in thy Family every day, but not knowing the inward lusts and workings of their hearts towards God or Sin, thou knowest not, how to pray *as thou oughtest*: thou knowest not what to confess, and what to pray for, nor what to bless God for.

Not
walking
with gra-
vity,

4. *Have you walk'd with that gravity before your Wives, Children, and Servants, as ye ought? Have you not made your selves vile by lightness, frothiness, and unseemly carriages? Governours of Families are the Vice-roy's*

roy's of God : they are in the place of God; and therefore should keep up their *Authority*, and not sinfully run into such vanity and familiarity with their inferiours, as to breed in them contempt of the Ordinance of God.

5. You have given your Children and ^{Not gi-} Servants time to work for your selves, but ^{ving} *have you afforded them time to serve their God* ^{them} *in?* Too too many use their Inferiours, just ^{time to} *as they use their Beasts ; they work and feed in* ^{serve God} *their Beasts , but never instruct : no more do they instruct their Inferiours. When do you call your Wives, Children, Servants, into your Closet , and not only press them to look after their Souls , and in order thereunto , to spend some time in Prayer, Reading, Meditation , &c. but tell them how God wrought on you , how he awakened you , what corruptions prevail'd with you , and how God help'd you to crucifie them : How do you know , but the same motives might melt , reduce , and turn their hearts too ?*

6. *Have not you miscarried, as to the time, Taking for the management of your religious work , in undue your houses ? Some Governours Pray in the time for Morning too early : so early, with a small Family-Duties. part of their Family , whilst others are in In the Bed , or in the service of the World , so that Morning , they worship not God together , as they too early ought : and this is past over with silence ; but if they miss of their Servant in the Shop or Field , O ! how doth the fire of Hell break forth at their lips ? How angry is the Governour ?*

nour? he cries out, O! I shall be undone by the unfaithfullness of my Wife, Children, Servants; but sees not a greater danger, a more probable ruine falling on him for not having his Family to worship God with him.

Too late. Others *deferr Morning Prayer till it be almost Noon*. They will adventure into all worldly employments, (as we say) without fear or wit: they see no need of God to protect them from outward or inward dangers, no need of Gods blessing, till they are ready to fill their panch, and then some *Collets* must be said, some *short Prayers*; it is the Custome of their fore-Fathers, it is the Religion of their Ancestours, or Conscience will trouble at the total neglect of the *Morning Sacrifice*, and therefore the Prayer shall be run over with more hast, than the boy that saith his lesson; that they may rise up to eat, drink, and play.

As Evening too late.

And as some are *unseasonable* in their duties in the *Morning*, so at *Evening*. Whilst their strength lasts to serve the world, they attend it, some 'till even midnight, and then; come let us go to Prayer; when the poor Wife, Children, and Servants, had rather be in bed, than on their knees. The Governour Prays

1 Sam.

2. 17.

Putting off family Prayer with a long grace;

dully enough, and that while the poor family sleep, or nauseate the duty; and so like *Elies Sons*, these *Sons of Belial* cause their people to abhorre the offering of the Lord.

Are there not also some *Professing-Governours* (unworthy of the name of Christian) who think to please God and the family with a long

long grace before meat, which shall be in lieu of all the service of the day?

7. How few are there that read the Scriptures and good books in their houses? O! this will take up too much time; as if God had given men all their time to neglect him in, and to indulge to the services of the Flesh, World, and Devils.

Not reading Scriptures and good books.

CHAP. XXIX.

The sins of Husbands and wives.

Husbands and Wives are call'd to reflexion on their miscarriages, jointly, severally.

Husbands and Wives sins.

Jointly, for their not being so carefull of their choice, as they should have been: not seeking God enough in a matter of so great consequence, which was for term of life, and wherein the Souls of each other were so highly concerned. The Wife is bound by the Law as long as her Husband liveth; but if her Husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will, only in the Lord. Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? That they came together upon

1 Cor. 7. 39.
2 Cor. 6. 14.

low, earthly, and lustfull motives, for profit & pleasure, beauty, rather than to further the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Sons of God saw the Daughters of Men, that they were fair; and they took them Wives of all which they chose. That they did not by Prayer and Fasting try to live unmarried, though the Apostle told them of the advantages of serving Christ thereby. He that is unmarried, careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord.

Gen. 6. 2.
1 Cor. 7. 32.

The Husbands sine in not loving as Christ.

Severally. Husbands, ye have not loved your Wives, as Christ the Church; though the command be expresse, Husbands, love your Wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, Christ is faithful to his Spouse. I will abide for thee. Thou shalt abide for me many dayes,

thou shalt not play the Harlot, and thou shalt not be for another man, so will I also be for thee.

Eph. 5. 25.

But though you have not been Adulterers in any gross act, yet how oft have you wish'd the bond of marriage were broken? and have not you had eyes full of Adultery? hath not your love to others degenerated into secret lust? Christ is patient to his Church, but hath your love suffered all things? upon light matters, what frowns, I will not say what blows? Hath not family-prayer been neglected through your wrath? Christ gives no occasion of jealousie; but have not some of you? The Lord searcheth hearts. Christs love is bountifull; how short have you kept your Wives, contrary to your engagements to endow them with all your worldly goods? Christ keeps company

Hos. 3. 3.

pany with the Wife of his bosome; but have not some of you been more abroad than at home? Christ ediseth his Church: Do ye dwell with your Wives as men of knowledge? Christ doth communicate secrets to his Spouse: Are not ye strangers to the hearts, though perhaps not to the bosomes, of your nearest Relations? Christ doth confer often with his Church about the mysteries of God: I wish you did so. I fear some of you are silver tongued abroad, to get you a name, forward to speak of Christ, but dumb at home even to your Wives as well as Children. The Woman learns not, though she ask her Husband at home. Christ gives the sharpest rebukes to his offending Spouse privately, and when he gets her alone; But do not you reprove before Servants and Children? Hereby they learn frowardnesse; when brought into this relation, and at present slight the Wives of your bosomes. Christ doth not blaze his Wives infirmities; but so have ye. Christ puts the best construction on what his Spouse doth. The spirit is willing, though the flesh be weak. But do not you put the worst? When your lusts are quenched, your love is gone. Christ doth pity his Church as the weaker vessel; if ye did so, the family would be the better governed. Christ doth sympathize with his Church: In all her afflictions he is afflicted; but how fretfull, churlish, and Nabal-like are you, when the hand of God is heavy on your nearest Relations? Christ doth vindicate his Spouse, and is greatly displeased when she suffers from the world; but

*2 Cor.
14. 25.*

cannot some of you help to deride your *Wives* ; and not frown when they are wronged and abused? *Christ* doth not upbraid his Spouse with her low condition before he he put honour on her ; but alas! How oft have ye cast into the dish what the condition of your *Wives* was before you cast your eyes upon them? *Christ* gave his life for his Church: what hast thou done and suffered to save the Soul of thy *Wife*? *Christ* rules his Church, not with a rod of Iron, but with a Scepter of Love: Is your dominion exercised with discretion and love? Are all things done in Charity? Is she to thee as a loving Hind or Roe? *Christ* doth not count his Spouse as a Servant, but a Friend; he doth not domineer over his Church, but hath high thoughts of her; but how many husbands use their *Wives* hardly better than Servants? *Christ* notwithstanding keeps up his authority over his Church, but do not many Husbands loose it through too much uxoriousness, and make themselves contemptible, by yeilding to their *Wives*, as *Adam* to his, whence came at first all sin; disorder, and misery into the world? How did *Solomon* fall? *Christ* yeilds to many of his *Wives* petitions and suits to him; but many are worse than the *Heathen* was to his *Wife*, He said unto her, What wilt thou *Queen Esther*? and what is thy request? it shall be even given thee to the half of the Kingdom. The poor *Wife* must use the mediation of others to have her desires accomplished. When *Christ* doth command his *Wife*, his Church, he doth it mildly: We

Prov. 5.
19.

Esth. 5.
3.

We pray you in Christs stead. But many Husbands imperiously enough, too much, God knoweth, when for loves sake they should rather intreat. Christ doth love his Spouse, though he gains nothing by her; but alas! How many are severe enough to their Wives, when they fail of that Estate, &c. that they expected from them?

As Husbands fail, so do Wives; even as the Church is subject unto Christ, so should ye have been to your own Husbands in every thing. But how have ye affronted your Light? The true Church of Christ loves him inwardly, as well as outwardly: so should ye have loved your Husbands; but alas! How little have ye shewed the union betwixt the Church and Christ by your affections? The Church loves Christ more than Angels: Whom have I in Heaven but thee? And there is none upon Earth that I desire besides thee. But how many Wives are commending others Husbands more than their own? If my Husband were thus, and thus, &c. Thy Husband should be to thee the most precious of all persons, the most lovely in thine eyes. Not parts and gifts, but the good pleasure of God, should be the ground of this special love. The Church honours Christ above all other persons in the world; but have not some of you mean, low and base thoughts of your Husbands? The Church is subject to Christ in all things; but will not some of you wear what you please, goe where you please, eat what you please, and employ your selves in what you please? Yea,

Philem. v. 9.

Wives miscarriages, in not loving their Husbands as the Church loves Christ.

Eph. 5.

24.

Psal.

73. 25.

- though contrary to your Husbands just commands, and meek entreaties? The *Church* fears Christ: so should Wives: I say not either should, with a slavish, but both should, with a reverential fear. Remember *Michal*, *She despised her Husband in her heart*, (She did not express her slighting of him, as many do, in words) and she had no Child unto the day of her death. God took the Husband's part, and put a remark of displeasure upon that her sauciness. For slighting the Ordinance of God, her *Head*, (though but in her *heart*) God plagued her in her *Womb* with barrenness. The *Church* loves Christ more and more; but O the decays of *Womens affections to their Husbands*! Partly through levity, and partly through age, and partly through crooked Providences! Whereas thou shouldst have kept the Covenant of thy God. The *Church* doth commend Christ; but seldome are Wives careful herein, to imitate the Church of God. How many do blazon their infirmities more frequently, than commend their graces? The *Church* is careful to please Christ in all things: The married Woman should care (study) to please her Husband, by her attire, behaviour; words; She should goe, speak, and do so, as may render her most acceptable in his sight, in every thing. How many cross Wives are there, that love to vex, rather than to delight their Husbands? They will cloath and adorn their bodies, to make them lovely to strangers, rather than to their own Husbands. The *Church* bears patiently re-
bukes
- 1 Chron.*
15. ult.
- Prov.* 2.
17.
- 1 Cor.* 7.
34.
- Eph.* 5.
24.

lukes and blows from Christ: so should Wives; as *Sarah* was commended for her meekness. The ornament of a meek and quiet ^{1 Pet.} Spirit, is in the sight of God, of great price; 3. 4, 5, for after this manner, in the old time, the holy 6. Women adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own Husbands, even as *Sara*, &c. The Church gives Christ reverend Titles of honour and esteem: but alas! Wives are so proud, so self-conceited of their own worth and merit, that they cannot but disrespect all others, even their own Husbands. Hereby they shew not themselves to be the Daughters of *Sarah*; She having occasion to think of her Husband, ^{Gen. 18.} presently this title Lord came out of her ^{12.} heart into her mouth: and the Holy Ghost ^{1 Pet. 3.} takes notice of it: yea a second time, sure 6. it was for some high end; and proves that she obeyed Abraham, because She called him Lord. Perhaps the Wife will tell me, these are but trifles that I cross my Husband in: I must tell thee, to break the order of God for toys and trifles will greater thy sin at the day of accounts. What wilt thou, darrest thou for so slender a matter tread down the Law of thy God, and hazard the ruine of thy Soul? O! consider this, and turn not your duties to your Husbands into matter of talk and pastime, as the manner of most Women is.



CHAP. XXX.

*The miscarriages of Professing-Parents
and Children.*

As Pa-
rents,

Parents, O! how little do you plot for the good of future generations? how little do you care whether God hath a Name when you be dead and gone, that Christ survive, and holiness flourish, when you shall be rotten in your graves? O! 'tis through your default, that the name of Christ is not had in everlasting remembrance: if you were faithful, how would the generations to come bless the Lord in your behalf? If you were active and diligent, you might convey holiness down to your posterity, as you have been unhappy instruments to convey down a stock of sinne, you have been instruments to convey down the curse; but are not you careless to convey down grace? The World would soon mend, the Church of Christ would soon regain its antient lustre and beauty, if ye did but faithfully discharge your duties to your Children: you might suffer little Children to come to Christ, yea you might fill the Kingdom of Heaven; but do not you rather fill the Kingdom of Hell? And as *Fero-*
boans

boam made Israel to sin, do not you instead of leading them the way to Heaven, lead them the way to Hell? O! consider seriously and sadly how farr you are guilty with respect to the Souls of your Children.

1. By giving them bad examples. Chams not covering his Fathers nakedness was a sin conveyed down to all his race, and therefore God chargeth the Church of the Jews against that sin, under the expressions of *walking in the manners of the Nations*. *Ye shall not walk in the manners of the Nations; which I cast out before you; for they committed all these things.* Your pride, sensuality, carelesness in the worship of God, your passions towards your Wives, and Wives towards their Husbands, your frowardness toward servants, &c. teach your Children so to carry themselves towards others. One check't his Son, and said, never Parent had so wicked a Child; yes (said the Son) My Grandfather had.

Giving their Children bad examples. *Levit. 20. 11. & 23. compar,*

2. By humouring and cockering your Children in their Sins: Teaching them early to be proud of their fine clothes; and to revenge, *Come, give me a blow*, saith the Mother to the Child; whilst it sits on her lap. By indulging to his voluptuous course of life, it is thought *Isaack* smarted in his Son's future disobedience, even by suffering him to sport and hunt away too much of precious time. Many, like Apes, kill their Children with culling them. *Austin* tells a sad Story of one *Cyrillus*, who loved an only Son immoderately, and let him do (without

Cocker- ing them in sin,

- correction) what he would: afterwards this cockered Son, in a fit of drunkenness, offers violence to his Mother, killed his Father, wounded mortally two of his Sisters, and would have ravished another. Through foolish pity, Parents, especially Mothers, give the reins unto their Children, when they are young, and thereby they grow headstrong, and are a shame to the Mother that bore them.
- Prov. 29. 15.* The sparing of the Rod is the ruine of the Child. Do not you reprove your Children, as old fond *Eli* did? Thereby he brought a plague upon himself and upon his posterity. What saith one? never cease convincing or correcting till thou hast subdued the spirit of thy Child, if he contends with thee. You pretend such harshness is inconsistent with love; but I say from the Lord, such fondness and indulgence is consistent with hatred; and I am sure the Lord is on my side, in this. *He that spareth his rod hateth his Son, he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.*
- Prov. 13. 24.* Is it love to suffer a wound in thy Child to fester (and thereby to destroy him) rather than to apply a painful corrosive for the expediting the cure? But what saith the fond Mother? O! If the Child should be the worse for my correction, it would be a trouble to me whilst I live. O that such a doting Mother would hear the Lord himself! *Correct thy Son, and he shall give thee rest, yea he shall give delight to thy Soul. Withhold not correction from the Child: for if thou beatest him with the Rod, he shall not dye. Foolishness is bound.*
- Prov. 29. 17.*
- Prov. 23. 13.*

bound in the heart of a Child, but the rod of correction shall drive it farr from him. *Prov. 13. 22. 15. 10*

3. By not acquainting them with the Lord, and his wayes, and that betimes. Hath not God commanded, that his Laws should be whetted by you, upon your Children? Thou shalt teach them diligently (*Hebr. whet or sharpen*) unto thy Children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. Some conceive; that Catethising of Children is not obscurely hinted in this ancient Precept. And is not Child-hood and Youth the time, wherein Solomon adviseth the Children of men should be trained up in the way wherein they should goe? O Parents! If God be worth your own acquaintance, is he not worth the acquaintance of such as are so near and dear unto you? Can you without trembling think, that as soon as Death breaks up your house, you may to Heaven, and your Children must to Hell, and thither through your default? But if you should dye in this neglect of instructing your Children, you will be miserable as well as they: And O! What a greeting will there be hereafter between ungodly Parents and Children? What an hearing will it be to your tormented Souls, to hear your Children cry out against you, *All this that we suffer was long of you, you should have taught us better, and did not*: What an addition will such out-cries be to your misery?

Parents and Childrens sins.

Suffering Children 4. By *not redressing the disorderly carriage of your Children towards one another.* How to fall out few *Rebecca's* are there? She was careful with one to remove jars and mischiefs that might arise between her two Sons.

Not praying for them. 5. By *not praying for your Childrens Souls*, and against those very particulars, which their natural constitution leads them mostly to.

Not correcting a time right. 6. By *not correcting them aright*: as to time, not early enough; He that loveth him correcteth him beimes: not, whilst the fault is fresh in his thoughts, with all the aggravating circumstances thereof; Not, with compassion enough. You have reason (saith Mr Dod) to be angry with your selves, rather than to be bitter to your Children; for you correct your own sin in your Children. If the Child be curst and froward, hath he not seen his Parent brawling and contentious, &c? *not ushering correction with Prayer*, that God would bless word and rod. Commonly Parents correct in an high passion, whereby *Prayer is hindered*; and the Medicine becomes invalid.

Being over-angry 7. By *being angry without a cause, or above the desert.* Anger must be let out according to the nature of the offence. If Parents be always chiding or correcting, they make their Children resolute, like *Hagar* and *Ismael*, to take up their heels, and into the Wilderness will they, any where to be delivered from such hard usages. *Provoke Eph. 6. 4 not your Children to wrath.* Some Parents want

want *natural affections* : are too severe ; Correction like Physick , if too frequent , will work no more with Children , than our meat with us.

8. By *loving your Children more than God*, Loving loving them as they are yours , not as they inordinately are Gods , as they bare your Image , not naturally Gods , for their beauty and parts, rather than for their graces ; loving a beautifull Child , that is voyd of grace , more than a deformed Child , though eminent in grace, loving one excessively, as *Jacob, Joseph*, hence *Joseph* is envyed by the rest : prodigal favours to some, especially if without reason, are offensive to others, who are less respected : Loving so, as loth to let them go when God calls for them , you cannot say as *Eli*, *it is the Lord*, ^{1 Sam.} *let him do as seems him good*. God pulls and ^{3. 18.} you pull, and you quarrel with God about the goard , and you think you *do well to be angry*. *Job* blessed God , when God took all away at once by one blow.

9. By *not devoting them to some honest calling*, but letting them live in idlenenes, and ^{Not providing} so they grow up monuments of your neglect. ^{calling} Some Gentlemen train up their Children to hold an Hawk , to follow a Dog , and commonly they dye in an Alehouse , or shorten their lives thereby. But if you do provide a calling for your Children , is it not what is most gainfull, rather than what will be most usefull to the good of the Soul? Had you not rather have them rich Factours among Idolaters (where they learn the manners of the ^{or not the best.} Hea-

Heathens) then to have a meaner calling at home , where the Gospel is preached in power and purity ?

Not matching them aright. 10. By *not matching them to godly persons*, but rather to the rich: Hereby ye shew that the silver shrines are in higher repute than grace and Godlinefs.

Giving away all to them. 11. By *giving all to your Children*, though the Church of God hath more need of it. Hereby you evidence that you *prefer not Zion before your chiefest joy*: that you love the outward grandeur of your Children more than the prosperity of the Church. It is a wonder (saith Mr. Baxter) how so many seemingly holy , can quiet their Consciences in such a sin as this is ? If one of you have two or three hundred pounds *per annum*, it is a wonder if you leave an hundred pounds a year of it to pious or charitable uses. Nay do not Parents leave all to their Children ; when they have apparent proofs that they will spend it in the service of Hell ? O ! Let Parents tremble. What wilt thou inable and strengthen thy Children to rebell against God ? put fuell to the fire ? put swords into their hands to fight against the most high ?

“ *Parents* I beseech you look diligently to
 “ your duties, be humbled for these and such
 “ like miscarriages. O ! look about you, and
 “ you will see a sad Apostasy in Children, Pa-
 “ rents *civil*, the Children *debaunched*: Parents
 “ *godly*, the Children *formall or loose*: Parents
 “ *eminent for grace*, Children *notorious for*
 “ *lewdness*. Let your bowels turn within you

"to see so great a degeneracy. Double your
 "diligence, that there may be an holy seed.
 "Knock off the chains of Hell from your
 "Children what you may: lay not out all
 "your time how they may be rich. It is no
 "time to seek great things for your selves;
 "seek them not. Pitty the Souls of your
 "Children, that are slaves to the Devil. How
 "can ye mind your trades, fields, bodies;
 "whilst the Souls of your Children are in
 "danger of perishing? How can ye see the
 "Devil driving your Children to Sin and
 "Hell, and ye stand still with a *Gallio-Spi-*
 "rit? Go to your Closets, and ask your
 "hearts, whether the Soul be not the prin-
 "cipal part of the Child? and whether that
 "needs not your care more than the body?
 "Do not throw away the Blade, to preserve
 "the Scabbard. God hath set you to watch
 "their Souls, to train up their Souls, to pro-
 "vide for their Souls: if you do not, what
 "is your love more than a Pagans, a Turks,
 "towards your Children? You think you
 "should be unnatural if you should not lay
 "up for your Children (though many Pro-
 "fessours upon pretence that God will pro-
 "vide, indulge to the flesh, pamper their bo-
 "dies, and starve their Children,) but here is
 "the best laying up, to lay up a stock of Pray-
 "ers for them, and a stock of Counsell and
 "Instruction in them. O Parents! Once
 "more I beseech you, put on bowels of pit-
 "ty and compassion. Pitty the perishing
 "Souls of your own Children. Command
 "your

"your Children to keep the way of the Lord:
 "suffer them not to fashion themselves ac-
 "cording to the course of the world. Con-
 "nive not at them in practising what you think
 "is abominable in the worship of God. Re-
 "member they are Gods Children more than
 "yours. *All Souls are mine.* God claims a
 "special right in them, *thy Sons and thy*
 "Daughters whom thou hast born unto me. If
 "you neglect your duties, you and your
 "Children are like to have sad greetings
 "when you meet before the Lord another
 "day. How will your Children lay their
 "hells and torments to your dore? how will
 "they curse the day they were born of such
 "fond women, who indulged to them in
 "their neglects of God? Cursed be the day
 "that ever I saw the passions, the pride, the
 "formality of my Father, or of my Mother;
 "for thereby I learned to sin against the
 "Lord. O your examples undid me! I had
 "not come to this place of torment had it
 "not been for you.

Ezek.

16. 20.

As Chil-
 dren, evi-
 denced in
 several
 particu-
 lars.

Children, Are not you also greatly faulty
 towards your Parents? If Children be richer
 than their Parents, *how irreverent are they?*
 how over familiar with their Parents? as if
 they had forgot the *first Commandement with*
promise. *How disobedient are they to their law-*
full commands? though the command of God
 be express, *Children, obey your Parents in all*
things, and it is added, *for this is well-plea-*
sing unto the Lord. *Children obey your Parents*
in the Lord for this is right. Honour thy Fa-
 ther

Col. 3.

20.

Ephes.

6.1,2,3.

ther & thy Mother (which is the first Commandment with promise) that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the Earth. Was Christ subject to his Parents, and should Luk. 23 not you be subject to yours? Sure you should 51. have obeyed them as farr as without sin, though their commands crossed your natural desires: as Joseph, when Israel said unto him, come I will send thee to thy Brethren at Sechem, though he knew he should be sent to them who hated him; yet he said unto his Father, Here am I. How stout and rebellious are Children when corrected? How few can say, we have had Fathers of our flesh, which Hebr. 12. 9. corrected us, and we gave them reverence? This Sin so provoked God, that he made it Capitall in the dayes of old. If a man have a Deut. 21. 18, stubborn and rebellious Son, which will not obey the voice of his Father, or the voice of his Mother, 19, 20, and that when they have chastened him, 21. will not hearken unto them: then shall his Father and his Mother lay hold of him, and bring him out unto the Elders of his City, and shall say, this our Son is stubborn and rebellious, &c. and all the men of his City shall stone him with stones, that he die: so shalt thou put evill away from among you. How rebellious are Children in refusing the callings which Parents have appointed for them? If the Parent be bound to bring them up to a calling, are not the Children bound to attend that calling? Brethren, let every man wherein he is called, 1 Cor. 7. therein abide with God. Christ probably was 24. brought up in his reputed Fathers calling. Is

- Mar. 6. *not this the Carpenter? How disobedient are*
 3. *Professing-Children in their marriages? Chil-*
dren are the Parents goods, so God reckon-
eth them, yea so the Devil reckoneth them.
When the Devil had commission to meddle
with Jobs goods, he falls on the Children.
- Gen. 21. *Some are worse than Ishmaels, Nature and*
 21. *Civility made him submit to his Mother for*
the choice of his Wife. If Children must o-
bey their Parents in littles, much more in
weighty matters. How little have you requi-
ted your Parents? This you are bound unto,
- 1 Tim. *To shew piety at home, and to requite Parents,*
 5. 4. *is good and acceptable before the Lord. Your*
Parents took care of you when you were as
beasts, you had your life and education from
them, and what now slight them when old
or weak? What laugh at their follies? What
when you are high, reject your parents that
are low? The very Heathen Oratour de-
clains against this; We are not born (saith he)
for our selves, but partly for our Country, part-
ly for our Parents. How are you degenerated
from your Parents commands and examples?
There are few true Rechabites, who forbore
wine from generation to generation. It
makes my heart ake when I read that the peo-
ple served the Lord all the dayes of Joshuah,
and all the dayes of the Elders that out-lived
- Judges *Joshuah, who had seen all the great works of*
 2. 7, 10, *the Lord, that he did for Israel; but there a-*
 11, 12, *rose another generation after them, which knew*
 14. *not the Lord, &c. and the Children of Israel*
did evill in the sight of the Lord, and served
Baalim;

Baalim : and they forsook the Lord God of their Fathers, which brought them out of the Land of Egypt, &c. and provoked the Lord to anger : and the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoylers, that spoyled them ; and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies. O ! in vain will ye relieve your selves in your Baptismal relations unto God, that you have Abraham to your Father : Gods judge-*Mat.*ments will be more bitter to you, more heavy *8. 11.* on you, than on others, when the Children of the Kingdome shall be cast out. You will be ready to curse the day you came of such Parents, that ever you had such holy instructions and examples, to no purpose, save to greata your condemnation. The Lord said unto Moses, This People will goe awhoring after the Gods of the Strangers of the *31. 16.* Land, whither they goe to be amongst them, *17.* and will forsake me, and break my Covenant, which I have made with them : Then mine anger shall be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and will hide my face from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall befall them ; so that they will say in that day, Are not these evils come upon us, because our God is not amongst us ? Nay, Abraham (whom you trust to, and the Privileges by him) will upbraid his Son Dives with his former good things : Son, remember that thou in thy life *Luke* time receivedst thy good things, and likewise *16. 25.*

Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. O most dreadful! Your very righteous Parents shall rejoyce in your ruine. The righteous shall rejoyce, when he sees the vengeance, &c. So that a man shall say, Verily, he is a God, that judgeth in the Earth.

CHAP. XXXI.

The sins of Professing-Masters and Servants.

As Ma-
sters,

Not
choosing
godly
Servants.

Psal.

101. 6.

First you Masters, see how guilty you are in the Relation of Masters.

I. Should not your eyes, like Davids, have been upon the faithfull of the Land, that they might dwell with you? How curious should you have been in this particular? But alas! ye would not buy an horse, an house, a Field, but ye would try them; but how careless have ye been whether your Servants were godly, yea or no? If they were strong to labour, was not that all ye look'd after? you look'd that they should be diligent in your work, your interest made you look to that, but have you look'd for such as walked in a perfect way to serve you? Hence many have been taken into Professours families, who were

were found wanton, and unclean, and thereby Religion hath suffered exceedingly: and others sweet-tongued, gossiping, gluttonous, drunken Servants, and so *Abaddon* was devoured by his Dogs: All the Masters gettings have been put into a bag with holes: a just and righteous judgement upon the Master for his preferring self before Religion: yea (which is a sadder consequent) hence the Children are corrupted by evil example, they being more apt to imitate the servant in his wickedness, than the Parent in his holiness. O if you had been curious in this particular! had you procured holy servants, by their zeal, forwardness and care of the Children, what families might you have had! All would have been pliable to your holy counsels.

Should you not have removed wicked Servants as soon as all your counsels would not take effect on them? *David* did so. *He that worketh deceit, and telleth lies, shall not tarry in my sight.* You on the contrary keep them as you do horses, if good for labour. It will never be said to your glory, *the Church in your house*: but may it not be said, *there is a nest of Snakes, a cage of Devils in your house?*

2. *Are not you too rigorous towards your Servants?* Do not you too much frown upon them, as *Laban* on *Jacob*? Do not you use words of reproach in your speaking to them? *Whosoever shall say, thou Fool, shall be in danger of Hell fire.* Do not you strike them

Not removing wicked ones.

Psa. 101. 7.

Being over-rigorous; *Gen. 31. 2, 5.*

Mat. 5. 22.

unnecessarily or immoderately? Have you forgotten the commands from Heaven? Thou
Levit. shalt not rule over him with rigour, but shalt
 25. 43. fear thy God. Masters, give unto your Ser-
Col. 4. 1. vants that which is just and equal, knowing
 that ye also have a Master in Heaven. And
Eph. 6. 9 ye Masters, forbear threatening, knowing that
 your Master also is in Heaven, neither is there
 respect of persons with him. Do you here
 as you would be dealt with? Would you
 have God to deal with you, as you deal with
 your Servants? Remember, you and your
 Servants have one and the same Master, to
 whom you are both accountable, you for
 your rule, and they for their subjection.

Nor di-
 recting
 them
 distinctly.

3. Have not you neglected to give that di-
 rection to your several Servants, as is proper
 for them, so that they intrench upon each o-
 thers work, and the painful work lies neg-
 lected, to your trouble, and to the railing
 of strife and passion? How few Mistresses,
 yea or Masters, are like *Solomons* vertuous
 Woman, of whom it is said, *She looketh*
well to the wayes of her household? Every one
Prov. should know his place and work in the Fami-
 31. 27. ly, that all things may be done decently,
 and in order: But in how few Families is it
 thus?

Nor being
 diligent
 them-
 selves in
 their
 company.

4. Do you give your Servants examples of
 diligence? So did that vertuous Mistress:
She riseth also whilst it is night, &c. She
 girdeth her loynes with strength, and strength-
 neth her armes: She layeth her hands to the
 Spindle, and her hands hold the Distaffe: She
 maketh

Professing-Masters miscarriages.

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maketh her self coverings of Tapestry: She maketh fine Linnen, &c. She eateth not the bread of idleness.

5. What love do ye show to your Servants? Not that be godly? Do you receive them as be-^{shewing} loved Brethren? As Paul would have ^{special} Phil-^{respect to} mon receive his Servant, after his Conversion: Receive him not now as a Servant, but ^{those that} are godly, ^{above a Servant, a Brother beloved.} A Chri-^{Philem.} stian Servant should be in the place of a be-^{16.} loved Brother, and should be preferr'd before a lewd Son. A wise Servant shall have ^{Prov.} rule over a Son that causeth shame: and shall ^{17. 2.} have part of the inheritance among the Brethren. How seldome do you show them good, as well as receive good from them? When they are sick, how little attendance and necessities have they as to diet, fire, and physick? Are not too many like the ^{Amala-} kite, who left his man on the plain fields, be-^{1 Sam.} cause he fell sick? How are many poor Servants ^{30. 13.} (who contracted their diseases by the unmercifull commands of some Professours) cast off by them when sick as unprofitable burdens?

6. Do you pay your Servants their wages? Not pay. Do you not pay them dodgingly? Hast thou ^{ing wages} not forgot that the ^{as they} Israelites were required, ^{ought,} when they set any servant free, not to let him go away empty, but thou shalt furnish ^{Dent.} him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy ^{15. 12.} floore, and out of thy wine-press: of that ^{13, 14.} wherewith the Lord thy God hath blessed thee, thou shalt give unto him? Hast not thou abated

red them of their dues for the time of their sickness, or the time they have spent in the service of God?

Not suffering them to speak.

Joh. 31.

13.

7. *Do not you deny liberty to your Servants to speak unto you? Job would not slight his Servants cause.* God hath set Masters over Servants; but he hath not given them liberty to trample them under their feet. Servants are under their Masters power, but not their lusts. You shew your selves *Nabals* by this churlishness and austerity. *He is such a Son of Belial, that a man cannot speak to him.*

Suffering tyranny among them.

As Servants.

Being apt to think, that they must be subject to none but Christ.

8. *Do not you suffer one Servant to tyrannize over another?*

Secondly, You Servants that Profess; I have somewhat in charge against many of you.

Being apt to think, that they must be subject to none but Christ.

1. *Your Pride, sauciness, familiarities with your Governours, make me think you would easily swallow the error of old, that we are to be subject to none but Christ, as if your freedom by Christ, had exempted you from all civil subjection to men.* By your refusing the yoke of your Masters commands, you reflect more upon your Master in the Heavens, than upon your earthly Governour: What saith the Apostle? *Let as many Servants as are under the yoke, count their own Masters worthy of all honour; that the name of God, and his Doctrine be not blasphemed.* Servants, be obedient to them that are your Masters according to the flesh with fear and trembling in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ.

1 Tim.

6. 1.

Eph. 6. 5

Christ. Servants, be subject to your Masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the foward.

But alas! how saucy are Servants? May not your Master say, *If I be a Master, where is my fear?* How fearless are you of your Masters, especially if your Masters be not very rich and honourable in the earth? who respects Gods Ordinance? Hence many Professing Servants stand covered in their Masters presence, sit before them, bow not to them, nor rise up before them.

Carrying themselves proudly, saucily, and too familiarly with their Superiours.

Mal.

2. *Do not you when you meet together blazon the infirmities of your Masters? Do not you carry your selves as Spies rather than as Servants; you do not herein as you would be dealt with.*

1. 6. Blazon: ing their Masters Infirmities.

3. *Are not you disobedient to your Masters commands, unless in what pleaseth you? You are rather the Servants of your own lusts, rather than your Masters Servants: you do not obey in singleness of heart, yea, you are not indeed obedient. The Centurion could say to his Servant, goe, and he went, &c. The Heathen Servants excel some that pretend to great attainments of Religion. He is the Master, that must have his own way; Judge 8. 9. ye then in your selves; whether you abide in the place, wherein God hath set you?*

Obeying them only in what they please. Col. 3. 22.

Tit. 2. 9. *Mat.*

4. *Do not ye refuse to answer when you are called by your Masters? This was Job's plague, I called my Servant, and he gave me no answer. Silence is sometimes a sign of consent, but here of contempt. If a Servant answers*

Not and answering when call'd.

Job. 19. not, 16.

not, when he is called, he forgets what his calling is. The Servants in *David's* dayes were of better dispositions, they did pick out their Masters mind out of every motion and turning of his eye, and hand, and so were continually in a posture for obedience.

Psal. The eyes of Servants look unto the hand of their
123. 2. Masters, and the eyes of a Maiden to the hand
1 Tim. of her Mistriss. For want of that honour
6. 1. that is due from Professing Servants to their Masters, the name of God is Blasphemed.

Answer- 5. As some by silence, so others by their
 ing again. tongues dishonour their Masters by answering
Tit. 2. 9. again. They should not answer by way of contradiction, or reluctance, as Servants are very apt to do. Some will even brag, how they gave word for word (perhaps blow for blow) nay two words for one. Hereby their Governours, if ungodly, fall foul upon Religion. Is this the fruit of your profession? prayers? running after Ministers?

Diligent 6. How lazy are some professing Servants?
 only under their Masters eye. Diligent only when under their Masters eye. Few serve their Masters, as *Jacob*, *Laben*, with all their might. The command is that
Eph. 6. you should obey in singleness of heart, not with
5, 6. eye-service as men pleasers. Mark, eye-service stands not with uprightness of heart. As
 Not designing to you would not be branded for Hypocrites, please God in their pleasing their Masters in secret for your eye-service.

7. How do some, yea many servants, eye only

only the pleasing their Masters, but doo not Eph. 6.
their work so Spiritually as to seek to please the Lord? Not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, 5.
but as the Servants of Christ, doing the will Tit. 2. 9.
of God from the heart. It is true Servants
should labour to please their Masters, yea in
all things; but they should seek more to ap-
prove themselves to God, than to any earth-
ly Superiour.

8. How imprudent are some Professing Ser- Mis-tim-
vants as to the timing of their duties? Some, ing duties
when never so urgent business is to be dis-
patched will then go in secret to call upon
God; whereas going to bed later, and ris-
ing earlier, would prevent much straitness
as to time, and spirit in that great duty:
Some will fall a talking of the things of God
to their fellow-servants very unseasonably,
not when they are at leisure, but when they
are most busily imployed for their Masters, to
the hindring of their work.

9. How many cheat and defraud their Ma- Defraud-
sters? Some cheat them of their time, by ing their
idling it away, being rattlers, and busie-bo- masters.
dies, or gossiping it away: Others cheat
them of their money or goods, hiring others
secretly to do their work, and pay them
with their Masters money or goods. Is not
this purloyning? and therefore forbidden? Tit. 2.

10. How many are improvident for their Masters goods and gain? They will see things Nor
spoil before their eyes: they will give what provident
is not their own to give: they make no con- for their
science to eat and drink what their Masters gain.
do

do not allow them: they are not contented with his allowances: they will steal small matters, and yet whatever they take, though but little, is the breach of the 8th. Commandment, and the less the temptation, the greater the sin, that they will break Gods Law for trifles; and serve the Devil for pieces of silver, and morsels of flesh. What saith Mr. Dod? "If ever they look for sound
 "peace of conscience, they must make re-
 "stitution of all such things: How much so-
 "ever they steal, so much they must restore,
 "and the fifth part thereto, or if they keep
 "it, unless they repent, they keep Gods
 "curse with it, and a woe unto their Consci-
 "ences.

Numb.

5. 7.

Zech.

5. 4.

Regard.
 Iels of
 their
 Souls.

11. *How many are altogether careless to get any good to their Souls whilst under Religious Governours? They ask not the way to Heaven, and if examined, they are tonguetied, will give no account of the hope that is in them.*

Murmur-
 ing at re-
 proofs
 and cor-
 rections.

1. Pet. 2.

18, 19,

20.

12. *How do many murmur under reproofs and corrections? What saith the Apostle? Servants be subject to your Masters, not only to the gentle, but to the froward; for this is thank-worthy, if a man for Conscience towards God endure grief, suffering wrongfully: for what glory is it, if when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently: this is acceptable with God.*

unfaith-
 ful to

13. *How unfaithfull are many to their Masters Children? Not heeding them, and providing*

viding meat, and other necessities for them in their Masters absence?

14. *How scornfully do even Professing-Servants receive a Catalogue of their duties? How loth are they, yea how do some care, to know the mind of God, as to the extent of their obedience?*

Receiving scornfully a Catalogue of their duties.

15. *How many ways do you fail towards your fellow-Servants? Do not you seek to undermine them of the respect their Masters bare them? Do not you labour to supplant them? Do not you envy them? Are not you unfaithfull to one anothers Souls? Do not you wast time in idle and impertinent discourses? Are not you evil examples to each other? Do not you suffer Sin to rest upon each other? Are not you guilty of not easing and relieving them, when they are overcharged with businesses? Do not you carry your selves proudly and magisterially towards Apprentices? Do not you joyn in a confederacy to tell tales against your Governours? And do not you charge your fellow-Servants with secresy therein, whereby the Name and Authority of the Master is lost, and all hopes of edifying are taken away?*

Their miscarriages towards their fellow-Servants.

from the itching of their ears : Paul was careful to preach not with *enticing words*, with the wisdom of words : Though he could speak with tongues more than all, yet he desired to speak rather to edification. It is likely your Ministers could have been *Seraphical*, and in the clouds ; but they stooped and descended to your capacities ; and denied themselves that they might gain you : more desiring that you should be brought in love with the naked truth of the Gospel, than with the dress it comes in ; But nothing hath pleased your squeamish stomachs, but meat so sawced : you have loved the meat for the sawce, when there was no sawce you cared not for the Sermon, and when the sawce was gone you were weary of the Sermon ; you would have no more of the meat. A Sermon full of plain naked Scriptures would not down in our last times : We were Christ-glutted ; Gospel-glutted. It's observed by an *Historian*, that before the great Massacre in France, the Protestants were for a luscious wanton kind of Preaching. Truly (saith one of our own about 18 years since) *We cannot absolutely determine what will become of us : only we have cause to fear that consciencious Sermons, as much despised as they are, may be a commodity dear enough in England ere long, and visions may be less open, that they may be more precious.* How unworthily have the Ministers of Christ been slighted by even such Professors, who a little before, pretended at least, to have had their life & growth from them, and

1 Cor.
14. 18.

1 Sam.
3. 4.

Their miscarriages towards Ministers.

that they were the *Seals of their Ministry*, that they were begotten and bred up under their shadow; and yet in process of time have had low, mean, base and unworthy thoughts of them, debased them as *brats of Antichrist*, as *limbs of Babilon*? Have not many eminent Professors been ready to *entertain reports* against their Ministers? and have they not lost their esteems of them for one *real* or *supposed* weakness of theirs? though you have been under so many engagements to them for your spiritual life, &c. yet if you have seen a little failing or miscarriage in them, have not you forgot all their worth, and all their many years labours and cares for your eternal welfare? Have not you been so far from *esteeming* the *Messenger* for the *Message*, that you have *sighted* the *Message* for the *Messenger*? Hath not this been the language of your *hearts*, if not of your *mouths*, *What nothing but this preaching*? Have not those that at first admired, afterwards made nothing of this Heavenly Manna, because of the commonness thereof? When pearls were common among the *Romans*, they wore them upon their Shooes. Hath not even the *pearl* of the Gospel been trodden under foot by you? Have not you considered only the *matter*, and not the stamp of the Coin? Have not your Ministers, though they have not *kicked the dust of their feet against you*, yet oft complained to God of the contempt you have put upon them, and how much their Embassy hath been undervalued by you? It may be
you

*Uniones
emergere
e lato
cupiunt
Tert.*

you have thought it was no great matter to slight them and their counsels: but know for your trembling and amazement of Spirit, therein you have slighted Christ himself. *He that despiseth you, despiseth me.* May you not fear it will be more tollerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgement, than for you? *Luk. 10. 16. Mat. 10. 15.*

2. *How full of undue prejudices have your hearts been against your Ministers?* and you have not had the honesty to examine the grounds? When they have delivered truths of a sublimer Nature, than ordinary; or have delivered any thing more obscurely, than at other times, how rarely have you consider'd with them thereabout? Have not you gone among your Companions and fill'd your own and their hearts with prejudices against them? When they have insisted long upon one subject, have not you been offended? But when did you ever cry out of others for being too long telling Money to you, for spending too many hours therein? Hereby you have done the Devil as great a piece of service as any you could have done him in your life time. Let me publish that to thine eye, which was once whispered in the ear: *Take heed what thou doest, this man is a Roman:* should not you much more have taken heed of filling your own and others hearts with prejudice against your Ministers, seeing they were the Prophets of the most high: these were men of God: they were the special Ambassadors of Heaven? I think he said

Their miscarriages towards Ministers.

well, that *Prejudice against the Preacher*, is the great prejudice to the hearers. This Feaver of prejudice hath made many, like the full stomach, to loath the honey-comb. Hath not God met with repulses, whilst your Ministers have been entertained with prejudice? So long as you have been prejudiced, though you were convinced of many duties, yet you have not been perswaded to obey the truth. This hindred the *Jews* from closing with Christ, and made their house desolate, over-turned their Temple, so that a stone was not left joyned to a stone: it brought a kind of *Dooms-day* on them.

Not blessing God for them,

3. *How little have you blessed God for the Gospel-Ministry which you have enjoyed?* and yet hath it not been the best under the Cope of Heaven? This distinguishing Mercy did not affect your hearts as it ought. Some there were (but very few) would say, *Brown Bread, and the Gospel, is a Feast*. Few like the Christians at *Constantinople*, cryed out, *Better the Sun not shine, than Christosome be silenced*. You could bless God for Health, Estate, &c. but not for these great *Luminaries of Glory*, who were appointed to conduct and guide you unto *Heavenly Jerusalem*.

Not praying for them,

4. *How little did you Pray for them?* How little have you prayed for gifts and abilities, to goe through their whole work, for preservation for them, and for a sanctified use of all Gods dispensations toward them? How little did you deprecate the stopping of the

mouth

mouths, and supplicate that their mouths might be kept open, and that utterance might Eph. 6. be giv'n unto them, that they might open their 19. mouths boldly, to make known the Mystery of the Gospel? Have not they oft begg'd your Prayers, in the words of Paul, *I beseech you, Brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christs sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me, in your Prayers to God for me, that I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judea, (in England?) and yet have not you neglected to call upon God for their deliverance? How can you tell, but their mouths had still been opened, had not you neglected Prayer? Hath not Christ promised, Knock, and it shall be opened unto you: 7, 8. To him that knocketh, it shall be opened?*

5. Have not you made sorry Excuses for not bearing them? How little have you believed that Word, *He that beareth you, beareth me?* And by consequence, that not-hearing of them, was not-hearing of Christ himself. What slight excuses have been deemed sufficient to keep you from the *Shepherds Tents?* The Apostle would have us *Swift to hear:* *James* *Swiftness* notes diligence in taking the first 1. 19. occasion; but how have you, to complement with a Friend, to indulge to the flesh, for fear of a little rain, for fear of wetting your feet, for fear of losing a six-penny, yea a penny-Customer, declined several opportunities of attending the Embassadors God sent you? For these things the wrath of God is breaking out upon you: the day is come,

Amos 8. or coming, when ye shall wander from Mountain to Hill, from Sea to Sea, and seek bread Cant. 5. and find none. This very excuse, the fear of de- 3, 6. filing her feet, would not serve the Spouse.

Their
miscarria-
ges be-
fore, in
and after
hearing.
Before,
Hearing
without
antecedent me-
ditation.

6. How did you miscarry, both before, and in, and after hearing? How slender was your preparation to attend upon these Deputies of Christ? How little did you meditate on the Word you were to receive at their lip? Did you thus consider? The Gospel that I am about to hear, will be the savour of life unto life, or of death unto death: I shall be nearer Heaven or Hell by this Sermon I am going to: If the Gospel be alwayes hid, I am a lost Soul and shall perish: is my Soul hungry? This is the bread of Heaven: Is my Soul thirsty? this is the water of life: this is the milk whereby I must grow up unto eternal life: this messenger of Heaven will be for the fall as well as the rising of many in Israel: If he be not instrumental for my Salvation, he will be for my Damnation: As the rain cometh and watereth the Earth and returneth not thither, &c. So shall Gods Word that goeth forth out of this Ministers mouth, not return unto him void. How little did you consider the excellency and necessity of the Word that you were to partake of? What treasure was afforded you in an earthen vessel? That the Truths and Doctrines that your Ministers taught you, were of as much worth, as your Souls, as Heaven, as Salvation?

Prayer.

How little did you pour out your Souls in Prayer unto God before you went to hear your

Min-

Their miscarriages towards Ministers. 311

Ministers? Either for your *Ministers*, that God would open their *mouths* to speak the word *truly, sincerely, powerfully, and seasonably*, and *suitably* to your condition: or for your own *Souls*, that God would open your *hearts*, to entertain the word so as to profit by it, that you might not have *open ears*, and *shut hearts*, that you might not have *ears*, and yet *hear not*, as knowing that the *hearing ear*, *and seeing eye*, the Lord hath made even *both of them?* Prov. 20. 12.

How careless were you to purge your Souls Putting off the shoe. *before you came to hear the word?* *Moses* before he was to hear God speaking put off his *shoe*, to intimate that you should put off your carnal and earthly affections before you come to hear Gods word; But have not you rush'd out of your worldly employments to many a *Sermon?* How careless were you to *lay apart all filthiness, and superfluity of naughtiness*, that you might *receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your Souls?* If you have not come without *habitu- Eccles. 5. 1.* *al*; have you not neglected *actual* preparation?

When you have been actually under the *In hearing Ministry*, *Have not you heard irreverently?* ing irreverently; without *awfull apprehensions* of Gods Majesty and presence? Have you said of the place where any Minister of Christ hath preached unto you, as *Jacob of Bethel*, *how dreadful is this place?* Have you in your hearing *Sermons* set your selves in the presence of God, as *Acts 10.* *Cornelius* did, when *Peter* was preaching unto *him?* 33.

him? The King of *Moab* will rite up in judgement, to condemn the irreverence of many of our Professours; when *Ehud* told
Judg. 3. him, *I have a message to thee from God:*
 20. *the King arose from his Throne, and bowed himself.*

Carelessly, Have not you evidenced your irreverence in hearing *carelessly, dully, drowsily, sleepily, &c.* Have not you lent a more attentive ear to a Tale, to a Fable, to a Romance, to a Ballad, to a Stage-Play of several hours length, than to a Sermon of an hour? Have not you come to Church, as to an Apothecaries Shop, for a *recipe* to sleep? Hath not the Gospel come unto you *in word only*, and *not in power*? When the Minister threatened you from the Lord, could you say, *My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy righteous judgements*? How many months and years did Gods Servants threaten you with a *Famine of hearing the Word of the Lord*? but did this Judgement fright you, and humble you, whilst it lay in the cloud of the threatening, as the least appearances of an outward Famine have awakened you? When your Ministers came with the tydings of Peace to you, were *their feet beautiful*? May not your Ministers complain of you, as
John 8. Christ of the *Jewes*, *My Word takes no place*
 37. *in you*? So careless have you been of any thing that hath been spoken to you by them, though in the Name of the Lord. When your Ministers declaimed against your sins, did you so mind what they delivered, as to be

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be any whit troubled? Did you not *harden* **Zech. 7.**
your hearts as an adamant? Were you not so **11, 12.**
farr from being troubled for your sins, that
it was your only trouble, you could not
commit them without controul? Were you
not even troubled with admonitions and
counsels, commands and threatnings, that
cross you in your sins? Can you say, that **Acts 17.**
you *Received the Word with all readiness of* **11.**
mind?

Have not you heard heartlesly? without a **Heart-**
real sense of your want of the Word, and **lessly,**
without an appetite to it? Had you such ve-
hement desires after the treasure your Mini-
sters were bringing you, as covetous men
have after the treasures of the Earth? Could
you ever, with *David*, say, *My Soul break-* **Psal.**
eth for the longing that it hath unto thy judge- **119. 20.**
ments at all times?

Have not you heard unbelievingly? Not unbe-
crediting your Ministers Doctrine, and not **lievingly,**
applying it to, but shifting it off from your
selves? Have not their Sermons been there-
fore unprofitable to your Souls, because **not Heb. 4. 2**
mix'd with Faith? Can you say, that you
received *their Word, as the Word of God?* **1 Thes.**
That you applyed it to your Souls, as that **2. 13.**
which concern'd you? May not we say, with
grief of Soul, as our Lord hath said already, **John 5.**
You have not heard his voice at any time? **37.**
When you heard the Word, which is Gods
Word, did you hear God himself speaking his
own Word unto your hearts?

Have

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Have you not been cautioned by the Lord Jesus Christ, and by his Ministers, with a *Luke 1* Take heed how you hear? And yet how oft *18. 18.* have you heard the Ministers of Christ carp-
Carpingly *ingly*? Not with a willingness to be judged by the Word, but to judge it, and the Preacher for it? Have not you let slip the most material passages of the Sermon, and pitch'd upon the weaknesses or impertinencies of the Minister? How oft have you, when you could not blame the subject matter, found fault with the method, and the manner of delivery; and over-look'd that, wherein your Souls were especially concerned?

Non-obedi- Have not you heard *Non-obediently*? Have not you been *untractable* and *unteachable*? Have you not heard *proudly*, and not *hum-*
102. 911 *bly*? With *hard hearts*, and not with *hearts of flesh*, ready to receive the *impression* of the Word, and willing to be moulded and fashioned according to it? When could you say to any of Gods Ministers, as *Cornelius* to *Peter*, *We are all here present, to hear all that is commanded of God*? When wast thou of such an yielding Spirit, as *Saul* was of, Lord, *Acts 9.* *What wilt thou have me to do*? His ear and heart was open to every command: So was *6.* *Job's*, *That which I see not, teach thou me.*
Job 34. *Have not you had your Exceptions*? If Ministers have enjoyn'd you to pray in your Families, perhaps you heard them therein; but if they enjoyed from the Lord (the same Legislatour) that you pray in your Closets, that

that you examine your selves, that you fill your hands with both the Tables, they could not be heard; one reserve at least: Whereas the right hearer cries out, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? I will do any thing, Lord, actively or passively, to get Hell out of my Soul now, and to keep my Soul out of Hell hereafter.*

After hearing the Embassadours of Heaven, how faulty have you been? In not examining what you have heard by the written Word? The Bereans consulted with the Oracles of God, brought the Doctrines they heard to the measuring Line of the Sanctuary; but so have not you: They say, a man will tell money after his Father; but you have been too careless, to tell over the Doctrines you have heard. How many were there, to whom the reputation and worth of the Teacher, was sufficient proof of his Doctrine, receiving all that was stamp'd with his tongue? Have not you called such and such a Minister, Your Father on Earth, in the same sense in which Christ forbids it? Have not you had the Persons of men in admiration, and that for advantage? No wonder that Errours have abounded. Men, that through an over-esteem of the Minister, take all upon trust, or through sloth will not examine Doctrines, are like to be deceived.

May not Christ check you, rather than the Disciples, with, Why do you not remember? Have not you heard the Word, and instantly

After;
Not examining
what they
have
heard;

Mat.
23. 9
Jude
v. 16.

Not remembering

forgot 8. 18.

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forgot it? Hath not the Word gone in at one ear, and out at another? Have not you let slip the Word? The word παρορέωμαι is metaphorical, taken from a Sieve, or leaking Vessel, when the liquor runs out as fast as it is put in. Have not you hereby been ever learning, but not come to the knowledge of the truth? Your Memories should be like the Ark, wherein the Pot of Maunab was kept; but alas! When you heard the Word, then came the wicked One, and caught away what was sown in your hearts: and was not the Word, and the labours of Christs Ministers fallen so low, that you were contented, at least little troubled, thus to be pillaged of this heavenly treasure?

Not meditating on it.

Levit.

11. 3.

Luke

11. 25.

Have not you neglected Meditation upon the Word you have heard? It was one special way, whereby, in time of the Law, the clean Beasts were known from the unclean, chewing the cud. But how few ruminate upon what they have heard and received? They do not, with Mary, keep the sayings, and ponder them in their hearts. Blessed are they, that hear the Word, and keep it. How few retire into their Closets, and reflect on the usefulness of the Word, for the nourishment of their graces, for the destruction of their sins? How few consider, whether they have met with God in the Sermon, yea or no? You should have gathered up the words of Christs Minister, as Christ said of the fragments, so as none should be lost; or as the Gold-smith looks after the very dust of gold: but

but as soon as Conscience was quieted, did you ever think more of the Word?

How few have gone from the Church to the Closet, there to pour out their Souls for a blessing over Not pray-
ing it.
sing upon what they heard? From the Pulpit to

the Trade is bad; but from the Pulpit to the Ale-house, that's abominable: but all are not clear herein. O! If when your sin was discovered, you had gone into your chambers, and begg'd humiliation for it, and victory over it: and if when neglected duty was prest in publick, you had retired, and prayed to God to incline your hearts to keep Gods statutes, would it not have been better with you, than now it is?

Have not you neglected to talk of what you have heard? Have not some, as soon as dis- Not talk-
ing of it.
mifs'd from the Sermon, fallen into impertinent discourses; about news and trifles, or into worldly business; and so the thornes Mat. choak'd all the convictions, which they received under the Ministry? They consider not, that the Word they have heard, hath been the savour of life, or of death; and 2 Cor. that every one that goes from a Sermon, 2. 16. goes off either with God, or the Devil, in his company.

Have not you been bearers of the Word only, and not doers of it? Have not you so deceived Not pray-
ing it.
Jam. 1.
22.
your own selves? Your Ministers have prest you to secret Prayer, and to constancy in it; but have not you gone away, and continued in the neglect of that; wherein the power of godliness, and heart-sincerity mainly consists?

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Luke
11. 28.

Amos 8.
5, 6, 7,
8, 9.

Mat.
21. 43.
Luke
12. 43.

lists? Blessed are they that bear the Word of God, and keep it, i. e. that are good Practitioners; that have a conscionable care to regulate heart and life according to what they hear and know: They are rather blest, than the Mother of Christ was, for bringing him into the World: Christ puts a rather upon the good Practitioner, than upon the Virgin Mary. But alas! Let it be for a Lamentation; that so many Professours have been for hearing; but for doing only what they list: Saying, When will the new Moon be gone, that we may sell Corn? and the Sabbath, that we may set forth Wheat? Making the Ephah small, and the Shekel great; and falsifying the Ballances by deceit? That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell the refuse of the Wheat? The Lord hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, Surely I will never forget any of their works. Shall not the Land tremble for this, &c? The Kingdome of God shall be taken from you; and given to a Nation bringing forth the fruits thereof: But Blessed is that Servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing. When did you find the Glasses to discover and amend your Spots? Have you been cast into the Form of the Doctrine, which ye have received? Have you obeyed from the heart the Form of Doctrine delivered to you? Hath your profiting appear'd answerable to the many months and years you have sate under the Dews of Heaven? What do you know more than you did before? What do you believe,

love

love and hope for, more than you did? Have your hearts and lusts stooped more and more to this Scepter of Christ? Believe it Sirs, If Sin be not more odious, and Christ more sweet and precious, after you have been in the Shepherds Tents, you have lost your hearing hours, yea contracted more guilt to your Souls. That you have not been chang'd from glory to glory, is a great stain to the Ministry, and a great ground of sadness to the poor Ministers, who fear they have laboured in vain. And yet have not you been such unprofitable hearers, that Seekers, Ranters, and Quakers, have took occasion to cry down the Office of the Ministry, as a Cheat, as an old Almanack out of date; because they have seen how unsuccessful the labours of Christs Ministers have been upon your Souls? If you had come down from these Mounts with your faces shining; if you had received more of God upon your hearts and lives, you had more credited the Ministry, and put to silence these foolish men. What shall I say? A worse Famine is coming on Professours, than what happened to Egypt, and if you have laid up no store, what will ye do in the years of lean Kine?

7. Have not you greatly miscarried, as to Their consulting with them? Though one great miscarriage of your Ministers was, to deal personally with your Souls; and God intrusted them with the power of binding and loosing, Ministers, (doctrinally at least) and hath promised to Mar. loose in Heaven, what they loosed on Earth; 16. 19. and

Their miscarriages towards Ministers.

Isa. 44. 26. and to confirm the Word of his Servants; and perform the Counsel of his Messengers; yet how little weight have you laid upon their judgements?

Laying little weight on their Judgements. Have not you more credited the Physicians opinion of your Bodies, and the Lawyers about your Estates, than you have your Ministers concerning your Souls?

Not consulting with them at all. How seldome are Ministers consulted with about the business of the Soul and Eternity? Will not they in the Acts rise up to condemn this Generation? They repaired to Christs Ministers, with, Men and Brethren, What

Acts 2. 37. shall we do to be saved? But alas! How many have sate 30, 40, 50. Years under a Minister, and never advised with him what to do?

Through hard-Heartedness. Bride. They have been no more moved, than the Rocks were, that Bede preached to.

Or else, through the Pride of their hearts, they have thought to heal themselves: They have been so puff'd up with their own knowledge, that they have not cared to hear what their Ministers could declare unto them. If they be to take a Journey, they will ask the Way of every one they meet; but so unreasonably confident are they of their knowing the Way to Glory, (though there be many Ways, that do indeed lead down to Hell, yet seem the right Way to Heaven) that they will not so much as ask the Way thither-ward of any Guide. The Fool is wiser in his own conceit, than seven men that can render a reason.

Prov. 14. 12.

Prov. 26. 16.

Or else they have thought as well of their Souls as some doe of their *flesh*, that the wound will heal of it self. And hath it not been so done? no body knows, how? Can you tell how the troubles and impressions made by the Ministry in your own Souls have worn away? have not Ministers found after the House hath been swept and garnished, that *seven worse Spirits have entered* into the Souls of many convinced, and terrified Professors; and *their latter end was worse than their beginning*? Many (saith famous *Hooker*) in a stupid kind of sottish senselessness, wear out the blow, and so wast away to nothing: as many out of sorrow have become like senseless blocks.

How oft hath *Satan*, like a Cut-purse, drawn thee into solitudes, dissuaded thee from going near thy Minister, that he may rob thee of thy Convictions? and the better to effect this, hath he not perswaded thee to look on the Minister as proud, high, scorn- ing to condescend to hear thy Soul grie- vances, and complaints, whereas he hath many and many a time with the greatest importu- nity beg'd this trouble of dressing thy sores?

If you have consulted with your Ministers, have not you delayed going to these Soul-Physi- cians? When the wound was newly given, and bleeding, you should have repaired to them; but like *Felix*, you have dismissed your convictions to some other opportunity. How hath *Satan* befool'd many? perswading them that there needs not so much ado, that the

Thinking
the
wound
will heal
of it self.

Not con-
sulting
with them
soon e-
nough.
AAs
24. 25.

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Minister is too legal, that he will drive to despair, that (as *Abah* thought of *Michai-ah*) he will not speak one comfortable word, or that he will blazon the secrets of their souls, and so they shall get a blot by unbol-
soming themselves.

Their low
and base
ends in
visiting
them.

8. *Have not you had low ends in visiting them?* yea, not only low, but *base* in going to your Shepherds Tents? Perhaps they are full of History, and you would enrich your selves with the knowledge of the times of many generations past: perhaps they were merry, (*too merry* God knows, *too full of squibs and jests*, the Lord forgive the unse-
riousness of Ministers) and you have delighted in them, as *Saul* did in *David's* Harp, to drive away sadness and melancholy: or per-
haps your Ministers had quick, nimble parts, and you went to them to pick a *Sallet* from their *Gardens*, to pick some flowers of O-
ratory, or to please your fancies, or to spend away time; but how seldom to receive virtue from Jesus Christ through these pipes? how seldom to have your rockie hearts broken, and to be cured of your earthly Spi-
rits?

In invit-
ing them
to their
houses,

9. *How oft have you invited them to your houses only to feast them, and to shew outwardly your respect unto them?* but have not put the opportun-
itie to such uses, as *Mary* did Christs coming to her house? how light, vain, upserious, and jesting have you been in their companie? It had been more your wisdom, as well as dutie, to have propor-

sed some necessary *Queries* to them with respect to your eternity : you should have drawn out their gifts and graces by proposing such *Questions* as these.

“ How Sir shall I know the difference between the *assisting*, and the *informing* and *inhabiting* presence of the Spirit? How shall I discern the Spirit of bondage, from that bondage *Sathan* works in the Children of disobedience? How shall I know the difference betwixt temporary and saving Faith? How shall I know *moral* Repentance? How shall I know *moral* *Vertues* from *Graces*? How shall I know that I am gone beyond the utmost refinements of *Hypocrites*? How shall I know whether the Gospel hath had a saving efficacy on mine heart? How shall I know *Satan's* temptations, from the suggestions of mine own heart? How shall I know when *Satan*, and when the Spirit applies Promises? How shall I discern the motions of the Holy Ghost, from the impulses of *Satan*, when transforming himself into an Angel of light? How shall I know the teachings of the Spirit, from the teachings of Men? How shall I distinguish *Fancy* from Faith? How shall I know, whether I have only dreamed, that I am full, when all the while I have been empty? How shall I know the Devils black temptations, from mine own corruptions, that I may know whom to charge? How shall I get assurance that my Sins are pardoned? How may I obtain

Questions
to be
ask'd Mi-
nisters,

Their miscarriages towards Ministers.

“victory over the *World*? How may I be
 “delivered from spiritual sloth? What shall I
 “do, that I may retain the influences of Or-
 “dinances upon my Spirit? How may I be
 “more usefull to all my *Relations*? How may
 “I bridle my tongue, so as to speak evil of
 “no man? How shall I know what is the
 “work of my *Generation*? How shall I do to
 “work the works of God? What shall I do to
 “get a trembling heart under the *Word* and
 “Works of God? How shall I get a soft heart,
 “to mourn for my own and others Sins? How
 “shall I know what is my constitution sinne?
 “How shall I know whether my courage be
 “from natural temper, or the grace of God?
 “How shall I know whether my *Patience* be
 “natural or spiritual? How shall I know,
 “that I shall spend an eternity with God?

Such Questions as these should have been seriously debated with your Ministers; but woe and alas! When you and your Ministers have spent hours together, have not you contracted guilt, and made your selves unfit for secret duties, nay perhaps have not time for the discharge of them?

Their
 wasting
 Ministers
 time.

10. How have you devoured much precious
 time in the presence of your Ministers? Both
 your own, (which is short enough, therein
 to make your calling and election sure) and
 (which is a much more hainous evil) your Mi-
 nisters time? Have not you diverted him from
 his great meditations and projects for the
 everlasting good of your Souls? Have not
 you called your Ministers from their knees
 and

and studies to entertain you? and have not you proved *Wells without water*? Have not you by needless vain conferences obstructed your own good, and hindred your Ministers from being usefull to your own, and many more Souls.

11. When you have met with your Ministers, *have not you been swift to speak* (when to little purpose) *and slow to hear*, what your Minister, Gods Deputie, would have said unto you? whereas God requireth you to *be swift to hear, and slow to speak*. I have wondred to see the *impudence* of some women herein, who (as if none had tasted of *the tree of knowledge*, save themselves) have been like bellies full of wind, ready to burst till they had vent, and had no respect to the presence of their Minister, who could not be heard, because of their noise and clamour, though the Apostle hath sealed up their lips, by sending them to *ask questions of their Husbands at home*; yet they must be prattling, as if they had a Monopolie of all knowledge, and as if their Ministers were to learn of them, rather than they of their Ministers. I am confident it is not the Spirit of God; but the Spirit of Pride, Self-conceit, and vain Glory, which putteth private persons upon these bold intrusions: so that the Minister, who is the mouth of God, is made dumb by their overmuch speaking, who should *learn in silence*. What shall I say? hear not me, but the wisest of men, yea the only wise God in him: *In the multitude of words there want-*

Being
swift to
speak be-
fore, and
slow to
hear
their Mi-
nisters.

1 Cor.
14. 35.

1 Tim.
2. 11,
12.

Prov.
10. 19.

1 Sam.
16. 4.

Their
niggard-
liness to
them,

eth not sin ; but he that refraineth his lips is wise. Believe it , there hath been wanting in most Professours much humility , much seriousness, much reverence of their Ministers : you have not had that fear and awe which became you ; few have trembled at their approach to their Ministers, as the people did, when Samuel drew near.

12. *Your Niggardliness to your Ministers is none of the least of your sins ;* and therefore I shall take liberty to enlarge upon it. If mens titles to their Cottages , their water-courses, their wayes, their easements be questioned, presently a Lawyer is fee'd: we will be at any cost to settle the world surely ours: if our health be in danger , the Physician is sent for : both Lawyers and Physicians houses and rooms are full of Clyents and Attendants ; but men are contented to clear up their own titles to Heaven and glory , and to heal themselves of their sin-sicknesses : a plain argument , that they thought the Ministry but uselesse , and that they could make a shift to live without Ministers. Thou hast had Prescriptions for thy Souls recovery and health for these many years , and yet perhaps hast not given one farthing to thy Soul-Physicians. If a Physician write a few lines , purses are opened : if a Lawyer plead a quarter of an hour , yea if he plead not at all, but only give his advise , you think he deserves a fee ; but the Ministers work is so low in thy esteems , that he might have starved if all were as niggardly as thou hast been. Let this be

be considered and lamented. Your Ministers have been under a temptation to withhold the pressing of this duty upon you; for that many lay in wait to discredit them, as if they preached for hire, and *sought yours, rather than you?* but let me be your Remembrancer this day. We cannot say of you, as Paul of the Galathians, that *you received us as Angels of God, yea as Jesus Christ*, and that *you would have pluckt out your eyes for us*: Alas! what did you for us more, than the constraints of the Law compell'd you to? And how many wishes had you, that all the Laws for Tithes had been abrogated, upon pretence that Ministers should have had a better maintenance by a voluntary contribution?

But do not we know that the great sticklers for this have been most close-fisted to the Ministers? Have not some of them refused to give one penny to the Ministers, whom they waited on for years together? I wonder how you could in your reading the Scriptures (if you have ineeed read them) so long overlook, *who goeth a warfare any time as his own charges? who planteth a Vineyard and eateth not the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? Say I these things as a man? or saith not the Law the same also? For it is written in the Law of Moses, thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the Oxe, that treadeth out the Corn. Doth God take care for Oxen? Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow*

Giving nothing to them for their maintenance.

1 Cor. 9. 7.

v. 8.

v. 9.

v. 10.

- v. 11. in hope : and that he that thresheth in hope , should be partaker of his hope . If we have sown unto you spiritual things , is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things ? If others be partakers of this power over you , are not we rather ? Nevertheless we have not used this power : but suffer all things , lest we should hinder the Gospel of Christ .
- v. 12. Doye not know , that they which minister about holy things , live of the things of the Temple ? And they which wait at the Altar , are partakers with the Altar ? Even so hath the Lord ordained , that they which preach the Gospel , should live of the Gospel . That you may be the better convinced of the neglect of your duty , see the Apostle claimes it as his *inheritance* , his Power , his Right , and lawful Authority , to receive maintenance from the Corinthians : And indeed Christ hath impowered his Ministers , and they may demand it , without any just imputation of covetousness and self-seeking , as the *Labourer* may his hire . The Apostle had power to forbear working , i. e. at his Trade : He implies , that the Ministry would be the saddest employment , because of the laboriousness of it , if Ministers should not live of their Ministry : Besides , Ministers give people gold for brass : Again , They who ministered about the holy things , lived of the things of the Temple , yea and plentifully too ; for they had the Tenth , and yet were scarce the Sixtieth part of the People , for the number of the People , without the Levites , amounted to a thousand thousands and

and three hundred thousands: and the Levites, numbred from the Infant to the old man, were found but two and twenty thousands. But alas! Though the Apostle be so peremptory here and else-where, *Let him that is taught in the Word, communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things: And the Wile-man, Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thy increase;* Yet I may renew an old complaint: Many have dealt by their Ministers, as Carriers do by their Horses, they lay heavy burdens upon them, and then hang Bells about their necks: hard work, and good words they shall have; but easie commons, and slight wages: as if they were of the Camelion-kind, and could live by the air.

But if you have parted with any thing to the Minister, hath it not been as *Almes*, not as *Dues*, not as *Right*? Have not you excused your selves from giving what was due from you, with, *The Minister needs it*; not, *He hath a fair Estate, or at least a competency*? Yea, but what saith the Apostle: *Have ye not reaped our spiritual things? and should not we your carnals? Have ye not been instructed? Why then did ye not communicate to your Ministers in all good things?* Hath not the Lord expressly alienated a proportion of Goods for the Ministers labour? How dare you live in the Sin of *Sacrilege*? Is it not *Sacrilege* for you to detain from God what is due to him? *You are in the snare, for you have devoured that which is holy.* Suppose a man should

Gal. 6.6.

Prov. 3.

9.

Or else

giving

only in

charity,

not in

justice:

as an

almes, not

as due.

Prov.

20. 25.

should work for thee all the day long, would it be an excuse for thy detaining his dues from him, to say, The man hath a competency, yea he is rich, he is richer than I am, my Children want it more than he doth, he hath little or no charge? O! saith the Lord, *The Labourer is worthy of his hire.* Wouldst thou not say so in that mans case? O! Live up to the Light of Nature, or throw up thy Profession. It is no less than a wonder to see how little honesty there is among men, yea among Professours. To defraud a Minister is hardly counted a sin. The rise of this is the great contempt of the Ministry: A Sin that God is now reckoning with you for.

2 Chron. 36. 15, 16, 17. *The Lord God of your Fathers sent to you by his Messengers, rising up betimes and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place; but you mocked the Messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his Prophets: May it not be added? Will the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy. For this Sin, God brought upon the Israelites the King of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword, in the house of their Sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age, he gave them all into his hands. Have not you cause to fear, lest you shall also be so given into the hands of worse Babylonians? You can judge what is a Ministers competency; but when have ye a competency? You can add field to field, house to house, hundreds*
to

to hundreds, and yet the *Horse-leach* cries *Give, Give*: Yet do not you judge a small stipend, that will hardly keep body and soul together, a competency for a Minister? What is that great service you do for God above the Minister, that you should think it reasonable, to leave hundreds, yea thousands to your Children, and that the Minister should be kept so short, that he cannot leave them a groat? What shall I say to you? Let me borrow the words of God by the Prophet: *Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me: But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In Tythes and Offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole Nation. Bring ye all the Tythes into the Store-house, that there may be meet in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of Heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.*

O! Do not any longer detain what is due to your former Ministers: make restitution of unjust gain, as ever you hope to be saved. It is not enough to say, Lord, forgive me, I thought it not my duty; but thou must reckon how many years thou hast reaped spirituals, and pay what thou owest, or *Judas* will condemn thee, for he thought it unsafe to keep what was unjustly got. Remember *Zacchew*, he thought it not enough to give over his oppression, but, when converted, he made conscience of making restitution.

Let

Restituti-
on to be
made by
such, as
have not
given
what was
due from
them to
their Mi-
nisters,

1 Tim.

5. 17, 18.

Let the Elders that rule well, be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the Word and Doctrine: For the Scripture saith, thou shalt not muzzle the Oxe, that treadeth out the Corn; and the Labourer is worthy of his reward. Here you see double honour, honour of reverence, and honour of maintenance, was due unto your Ministers: Here is an allusion to the right of the first-born, who were to have a double portion: Their maintenance was due from you; neither should their maintenance have been ordinary mercenary wages, but such as is given by way of honour, as well as by way of reward. Have not you lived in the contempt of an

1 Cor.

9. 14.

The Lord hath ordained, &c. as before. Do not any longer delude your Consciences, by crying against Tythes, as Antichristian, as Jewish. Did not Abraham, before the Jewish Laws, pay Tythes to Melchisedech? And are there not from thence arguments drawn that you cannot answer? Why do ye not fear, lest, through the prevalency of Self, you should be too base, covetous and partial in your own matters? O! Give to God, what is Gods: Deny not your Ministers their dues: You owe vaste sums to them, which if you detain in this day of their wants, God will call you to a speedy account for the grinding of the faces of these poor, yea he will make you vomit up such sweet morsels, with all the rest of your substance, if not with your blood. Behold the hire of the Labourers,

Jam. 5.

4.

which

which have reaped down your Fields, which is if you kept back by fraud, cryeth: and the cries of them, which have reaped, are entered into the eares of the Lord of Sabbath. Lydia even enforced the Apostles to accept of her gift. The Macedonians beseech'd Paul with much entreaty, to accept of their bounty. If thou wert converted by one of them, thou didst owe to him no less than thy self: What thou art and hast, should not have been counted too dear for him, who was Gods Instrument, to pull thee as a brand out of the fire, even when thou wast half burnt. Say at length with David, *I will not serve my God with that which cost me nothing.* I shall conclude this head with the saying of a Reverend man, "It is a plain argument of a base esteem of God, of Grace, of the Kingdome of Heaven, that a Servant, a Factor, should have twenty times the allowance of Heavens Factor for your Souls: You are not come up to the honesty of the Pharisee, *He gave Tythes of all that he possessed*, even of the smallest things, of Mint, and Annis, and Cummin: And doth not Christ say, *These things ye ought to have done?* What were your Ministers more unworthy than the Priests of that Age?"

13. If you have not been niggardly toward your Ministers whilst alive with you, have not you been niggardly towards their Wives and Children after their deaths? Verily not minding the Widows and Children of

Mat.

23. 23.

Luke

11. 42.

Their regardless-
ness of

the Wid-
dows and
Children
of their
dead Mi-
nisters.

Their miscarriages towards Ministers.

deceased Ministers is a sin that God will remember in the day of accounts. *David* enquired after the seed of *Jonathan*: he evidenced his true love to the Father in remembering the posterity. O! when shall love be without dissimulation?

Their
grieving
their Mi-
nisters.

14. *Have not you been a very great trouble to their Souls?* Your Ministers were so affectionately desirous of you, that they were willing to have imparted to you, not the Gospel only; but also their own Souls; because ye were dear unto them: And is this your kindness to your Friends? to break even their hearts, who were glad to spend and be spent for you? How proudly have you carried it toward them? God threatned the *Israelites* that the *Cananites* should be pricks in their eyes, and thorns in their sides: Surely it better became *Cananites* to be thorns to the *Israelites*, than for you to be thorns to your Ministers. How oft have you grieved them to see your stoutness and rebellion against all their Counsels! May not your Ministers say as *David*, *I beheld the Transgressours, and was grieved: because they kept not thy Word?* May they not say, *We have seen your lukewarmness, your sloth, your earthliness, &c. and our Souls were troubled?* You should have been like the *Thessalonians*, the crown of our rejoicing; but you have been crowns of thorns, which have pierced not our heads, but hearts: You should have refreshed our Bowels, been as Cordials, and sweet refrectives, after all our

Psal.
119.
158.

1 *Thes.*
5. 19.

our wearisome labours; but have not you dealt unkindly with us? and the more we have loved you, have not we had the less love from you? Have not you been more merciful to your Horses and Dogs, than to your Ministers? You have baited, and been kind to those creatures; but God knows how, after all our toyle, our rising up early, and sitting up late, our spending our strength, our lungs, our spirits, yea and our estates among you, you have requited us evil for good, even to the spoyling of our Souls. *Ye stiffe-necked Acts 7. and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do al- 51, 52. wayes resist the Holy-Ghost: as your Fathers did, so do ye. Which of the Prophets have not your Fathers persecuted? &c.* Have not you in your hypocritie made outcries against others for silencing your Ministers? for taking away the bread out of yours and your Childrens mouths? and for removing them from their stations and dwellings? But may not I profess in the name of all my Fellow-Sufferers, that your misimprovements, your inconstancies, your pride, and earthliness, have been, and are our chiefest burdens? a greater pressure to us, than any burdens, that lye upon our names, bodies, or estates? I cannot but think of a passage of holy Mr. *Shepherd*: The Jews (saith he) did long for Christ, and when he came, they Crucified him: and you would have Ministers, and you had them, and though you did not (immediately) cast them out of their places; yet you so wearied their Spirits, and grieved the Spirit in them, that
you

you made them glad to bury themselves, and leave their places : you had Prophets and their tears and their sorrows too, yea and their blood too, and O ! what a light matter was it unto you to break their very hearts ?

Hebr. How little did you *obey them that ruled over*

13. 17. you, and submitted your selves, that they might give their account with joy, and not with grief ? How little did you believe, that *that is unprofitable for you* ? Have not you made nothing of it, for your Ministers to lose their labour, to put them upon crying out, *I have laboured*

Isa. 49. *in vain* ? Yea how have you grieved their very Souls with reproaches ? Some who have

45. pretended affection to them, yet have had their reproachfull Names of Priest, Parson, Vicar, &c. Though God hath put a Crown of honour upon them, by making them his Ambassadors ; yet how have some impudent Professours blasted them with their stinking breath, and profane scoffs ? Ambassadors are inviolable by the Laws of Nations. The Lord (saith one) hath set a better mark on them, than Cain had, and given them a better passport : *touch not mine anointed, and do my Prophets no harm* : yet you have made a light matter of vexing their very Souls. When you could have nothing else against your Minister, have not you been censuring him for his manner of speaking ? *His Listners (say they) are weighty, and powerfull, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible.* Now of how many a good Minister have we heard, that have been thus treated. Lastly,

2 Cor.
10. 10.

Lately, *Have not your Ministers been so* And be-
troublesome to you in your sins, in your forma- ing weary
ty, worldliness, lukewarmness, &c. that of them,
you were even weary of them? Have not you
 been as weary of them, as the Children of
Israel of Angels food? as weary as weak sto-
 machs are of feeding on one dish? Your Mi-
 nisters urged flesh-displeasing and self-deny-
 ing duties: they would not suffer you to sin
 quietly; and were not you therefore bur-
 thened with them? they would not stand
 and comply with your carnal ends and sinfull
 interests; and did not your hearts therefore
 cry out away with them? Have not you been
 like the *Gadarenes*, more willing to part
 with your Ministers, than with your swinish
 lusts? Because you did *not like to retain God Rom. 1.*
in your knowledge, 'tis no wonder if God *28.*
give up many of you to a reprobate mind.
 Hath not the Gospel been too costly, too
 chargeable to some of you? and too irksome,
 requiring too much pains taking, to others
 of you? O! when you Remember your cry-
 ing iniquities, for which God is chiefly con-
 tending with you, forget not this drea-
 minne of being weary of Gods Ambassade
 of being weary of speaking with God,
 of hearing God speak unto your Souls.



CHAP. XXXIII.

Profes-
sours mis-
carriages
toward
their Mi-
nisters
since their
removal.
Not find-
ing the
want of
them,
Not
esteeming
the loss
great e-
nough.

*Their miscarriages with reference to the
Ministers of Christ, since their removal.*

1. **H**ow many of you do not find them wan-
ting? This will be evident by the
following Queries.

*Have you indeed accounted that none in the
world want help like your selves upon this very
account? Do you look upon your selves as
sitting in darkness, yea in the region and sha-
dow of death? under a worse Plague than the
Egyptian-darkness? that was a darkness,
wherein men lived; but do you look on this
as a darkness of death? Do you account a
Throne without the Gospel but the Devils
Dungeon? Wealth without the Gospel, fuel
for Hell? Advancement without the Gospel,
but a going high, to have the greater fall?
Do you look upon your selves as under a
worse famine than that of bread? Cannot you
your selves make up this great loss? cannot
you set other things in the breach?*

Going
about to
make it
up, by
good
books,

Do not some of you set good books in the
room of your Ministers? I confess (saith a
Reverend Man) Reading hath its use; but the
voice hath a secret force upon the Soul, it hath
a Ministerial efficacy, by which the Authority
and

and Sovereign efficacy of the Spirit is conveyed. I pray God the fruitfullness of the Press may not beget a disesteem and contempt of the great Ordinance of the Minister already : you have been told already that *Luther* had rather his books should be burnt, than the Scriptures suffer a dishonour and neglect by perusing his papers.

Do not some of you set your own parts and Their gifts in their room ? Do not some of you own parts think that you have so profited by their Mi- and gifts. nistry, that you have no further need to attend upon any Ministers of Christ ? May not such doubt whether their experience of the power and efficacy of the Ministry hath been true, seeing true experience thereof sweet-*neth* the Ministry unto Souls, *raiseth up* their esteems of it, and *engageth* them to a further and more *cheerfull* attendance upon it. A true tast will *sharpen* the Souls apperite : the true Christian gets a Stomach by eating, as the *new born babe* by sucking. *As new born babes* 1 Pet. 2. *desire the sincere milk of the word, that you 2, 3. may grow thereby, if so be that ye have found that the Lord is gracious.*

Do not some of you go about to make up And your selves by attending on Christ's compani- Christ's ons in the sense of *Solomon* ? by going to compani- *Wells without water* ? by sucking empty breasts, ons. *Cant. i.* whence you can draw nothing, but wind or blood ? what is this but seeking the living a- 7. mong the dead ? expecting gracious showers from *Clouds without rain* ? making up the want of bread with stones, if not poyson ? O !

Their miscarriages towards Ministers.

why do not you say, *Tell me, O thou whom my Soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy Flocks to rest at Noon? for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?*

Not
mourning
enough
for the
want of
them,

What sighs, sorrows, tears, &c. hath the removal of your Ministers cost you? Cannot you rub it out very quietly? If you lose your Jewels, Estates, Names, Friends, Children, &c. we can read the sorrows of your hearts in your countenances: you are almost angry with God when a goard is smitten. O! what sinkings of heart are there among Professours? what cares? fears? griefs? not only to the sadning of their hearts, but altering of their countenances, when the world vanisheth? And yet no aking hearts, no dejected countenances for the glory's departing, for Gods shutting up house and departure? I am confident it hath not broke one nights rest to many, who yet will think themselves wronged, if they be not placed in the highest form of Profession.

Not Fast-
ing under
this Judg-
ment.

What time hast thou set apart to humble thy Soul for all thy abuses of the Gospel and Ministry thereof? If a Child be sick, time must be set apart to humble thee before God: this is your duty; but the other should not have been neglected. Thou may'st subsist better without Children, than without these Spiritual Fathers: a Gospel Ministry is a greater Jewell, than many Sons and Daughters. Thy having sinned away the food of thy Soul should have put thee in Sackcloth, and upon Fasting

Their mis-carriages towards Ministers. 341

Fasting with mourning long ago. *All Israel lamented after the Ark*; But are not you as merry and sensual at your tables as ever?

Yea are not you secretly glad at the removal of your Ministers? Ministers and Ministry (saith *Shepherd*) are bills of charges to a Congregation, and too costly Inhabitants among them. yea secretly being glad for their removal.

2. Have you justified God in the removal of them? God as a wise and provident Matter gave you glorious lights to do his work by; but you have plaid away your time: is it any wonder that he hath put out your Tapers and Candles? Have you confest the righteousness of God herein, that he will not be at cost to find you Candle light to play by? Hath this been thy hearts acknowledgment, "God gave me these lights, that I might work for him by them; and because I did not, but wrought the works of darkness; therefore he hath most justly left me in darkness, and in the shadows of death: because I received not the truth in the love thereof: I took it into mine head, but not into mine heart; God may justly send me strong delusions, that I should believe a lye. Not justifying God in their removal.

"It is the observation of *Parens* upon many of the Jews being seduced, that it was just with God, that they should believe impostours; because they would not give credit to Jesus Christ. O! God may make short work with us in his Judiciary proceedings. When God hath departed upon repulse, he hath left a dismall curse be- 2 The^s. 2. 10, 11

"hind him: I say unto you that none of these
 "men, which were bidden shall tast of my Sup-
 "per: If the meat be on the table; yet it is
 "just with God that I shall never tast of it;
 "for I have controuled the Spirit again and
 "again: twenty, thirty, forty years have I
 "vexed the good Spirit of the Lord; and
 "therefore he may swear in his wrath that I
 "shall never enter into his rest: If some
 "shall never tast that have neglected one
 "Call, woe is me, who have neglected
 "thousands. Take words and say; because
 "I have not obeyed the voice of thy Ser-
 Job. 36. "vants, 'tis righteous that I perish by the
 I 2. "Sword, and dye without knowledge.

Not blef-
 sing God
 for for-
 mer op-
 portuni-
 ties.

3. *How little have you blest, and do you
 bless God, that once you did enjoy a Gospel Mi-
 nistry? and such a Gospel Ministry? How sel-
 dome are such words as these, Blessed be they,
 and blessed be their Counsels, and blessed be the
 Lord, that sent them out to meet me in for-
 mer dayes, and for so many dayes, months, and
 years together, found in your mouths? It is
 a sign that your disesteems of the Gospel and
 Ministry do still abide, whilst you cannot
 find in your hearts to thank God for enjoy-
 ing so choice a blessing for so many years to-
 gether.*

Not cry-
 ing for
 their re-
 turn.

4. *What cries have you sent up to Heaven
 for the return of your Ministers? Dare you
 thus imprecate, Let my tongue cleave to the
 roof of my mouth, if I forget to pray for
 Zions welfare in this particuler? Had the
 Ministry of the Gospel been counted a glori-
 ous*

ous blessing, you would have sent strong
 eyes to Heaven, for the return of it: Had
 you believed, that they came to treat with
 your Souls, about your peace with God,
 and that God hath appointed this as the great
 means to bring your Souls to himself, you
 would not have parted with your Ministers
 so easily, being as little moved, as at the
 withering, and throwing to the dunghill, of a
 formerly flourishing Nose gay of Flowers;
 and you would have wrestled with the Lord,
 for the return of these glorious Lights of
 Heaven. How can you chuse but fear, the
 Lord hath no more Souls to convert in
 that place, from which the Gospel is re-
 moved? Jesus Christ prayed, that the Gos-
 pel might be sent to the *Gentiles*: In an ac-^{Isa. 49.}
 ceptable time have I heard thee. O! How ^{8. com-}
 should you have prayed for the fruit of ^{pared}
 Christs prayer? Have you back'd prayer with ^{with 2}
 prayer? Have you doubled your Prayers for ^{Cor. 6. 2.}
 the return of your *Fathers*? Have they not
 begotten you? *Should they not be unto you as* ^{Judg.}
Fathers? Will not Idolatrous *Micah* else ^{9. 17.}
 condemn you?

5. *How little do you set your selves in a po-* Not pre-
sture for the return of the Gospel and the Mi- paring
nisters of it? Until you have humbled your ^{for such a}
 Souls as low as the dust for your unprofita- ^{mercy,}
 bleness, pride, sensuality, earthliness,
 dis-esteems, and neglects of the Gospel,
 for your abuse of the talents of Gold, that
 you hid or wasted, can you imagine that
 God will intrust you with more talents? A-

las! few put themselves in a readinels: few prepare to meet God, as formerly they have met him in the solemn Assemblies. Verily,
Hof. 5. God is gone and returned unto his place, till you
13. acknowledge your offences (your Gospel-fins) and seek his face. But if ye seek him not early, how can ye hope for the bringing back the Captivity? that the glory and strength will return?

Being
 niggardly
 even now
 toward
 them,

6 How little do ye now lay out for the refreshing and feeding of your poor Ministers, now that their necessities are so growing? you cannot now excuse your niggardliness with this, they have a competency: Alas! most of them, and their many little ones are in great straights and exigencies, and what still straightned in your bowels? Is not the Proverb made good, *Out of sight out of mind?* If all were as unmercifull as some of you, they and their Children would swoon away in desolate Wildernesles. Remember *Hagar* and the Child: Did God pity that *Egyptian*? and have you no pity on your poor Ministers? Are not you so far from the *Macedonian* bounty, of giving above your power, that you will not afford them your superfluities? Who is there that redeems from his table, from his belly, from his cloaths, to cover these naked shoulders, and to fill these empty bellies? Doth not *Baruck's* sore run upon you, you trade for your selves, seek great things for your selves, and send away your spiritual Fathers, with, I pray God bless you, &c. be ye cloathed, &c. but

but do not give according to their necessities, and your abilities. O! *How dwelleth the love of God in you?* Boast what you will of your Profession and Faith, your Faith without Works is but dead.

CHAP. XXXIV.

Want of Love among Professours.

AS touching brotherly love (saith the Apostle Paul to the Thessalonians) you need not that I write unto you; for ye your selves are taught of God to love one another, and indeed you do it: But may not I say to English Professours, As touching brotherly love, you need that I write unto you, for you are not taught of God? “The fire of brotherly love (saith one) is almost ready to goe out, scarce any spark of it yet remaining among us; but instead of the fire of love, the wild-fire of passion rageth vehemently, and is predominant. Many live as if they had been born on the Mountains of Bether, the Mountains of Division; and as if they had been baptized in the Waters of Meribah, the Waters of Strife. Oh! that my head were waters, and mine eyes fountains of tears, to weep day and night for the want of love in the

A complaint of the want of love among Christians. 1 Thes. 4. 10.

the Christians of this generation towards one another. How common hath it been, to confine our love to our own party? We have not loved all the Saints. How few Butchers are there? How few love all in quibus aliquand Christi vident, in whom they see any thing of Christ? Many even hate those that differ from them, though but in Circumstantialls: Others, though they are ashamed to profess their hatred upon such an account, yet cover their hatred by deceit, till their wickedness can be hid no longer, but shew'd before the whole Congregation. The Devil began his Legerdemain this way, by covering his Enmity with pretence of Friendship. What saith the Apostle? Let love be without dissimulation:

Roma 12. 9. Professours speak? How few have purified their Souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the Brethren?

1 Pet. 1. 22. Most love in word and in tongue only, but not in deed and in truth. Many, like your Feather caps humble Servant, pretend love; but it never appears above-board: it is Dear Friend, Good Soul; but their hearts are not with you. In order to the convincing of us of our guiltiness herein, O that our Consciences may be suffered to give in full answers to the following Queries!

1. How have we call'd for Fire from Heaven, (like the two Disciples) when we have thought our selves dishonoured, in that others have not given such a reception to our wayes and practises in Religion, as we expected? Have not

*Ev'den-
ced in
calling
for Fire
from
Heaven
against
those of
different
perswasions,*

not Magistrates been intigated against godly persons, if of a different perswasion from our selves? Have not we wished others, that divided from us in some Circumstances of Worship, even banished? Have we not cryed out, the Land is not able to bear them? Have not we been glad, when such were put out of all Offices and Places of Profit? And have not some thought it good service to God, if they had been kill'd? Whilst some, under colour of mercy and tenderneſs, cryed for a general Toleration, even of blasphemy: Others ran into the other extream, and would endure nothing, that they deemed an Errour. Even to this day, if men scruple at the lawfulness of some Ceremonies and Gestures in the Service of God, they are thought worthy, not only to be cast out of the Church; but to be delivered over to the Secular Magistrate, for Imprisonment, and Confiscation of Goods at least: So much is *Pauls* meekneſs forgotten and un-imitated, who (though zealous against the Faith-destroying Errours of *Hymeneus* and *Philetus*, yet) would have much forbearance for others, when doubting of the use of Meats, and the *Jewish* Ceremonies. "I read indeed in *Pagan* Writers (saith one) that *Baxters* "Christians were as cruel as Bears and Tygers *Saints* "against one another, &c. But I had hoped *Rest E-* "that this accusation had come from the ma- dit. 8. "lice of *Pagan* Writers: Little did I think part 1. "to have seen it so far verified, &c. Lord, chap. 7. "What Devils are we Unsanctified, when p. 111. "there

“there is yet such a Nature remaining in the
 “Sanctified? Such a Nature hath God in
 “these dayes suffered to discover it self, e-
 “ven in the Godly, that, if he did not gra-
 “ciouſly and powerfully reſtrain, they
 “would ſhed the blood of one another, and
 “no thanks to us, that it is not done.

un-Saint-
 ing of
 them up-
 on that
 account.
*Hilder-
 sham* on
Pſa. 51.
P. 691.

2. To facilitate the deſtroying of ſuch
 without remorse, *Have not we blotted out the*
reputation of their holineſs, and repreſented
Saints even as Devils? “It is utterly a fault
 “mong you, (ſaid one of our *English* Wor-
 “thies formerly) that the difference in
 “judgement and practice about the Cere-
 “monies of our Church, hath cauſed ſuch
 “ſtrangenefs, and alienation of mind and
 “affection, between ſuch as do truly fear
 “God, both Miniſters and People; We are
 “ſo far from receiving, eſteeming, loving
 “and maintaining ſociety one with another,
 “notwithſtanding this difference of judge-
 “ment about theſe things, that we are apt to
 “deſpiſe and judge one another for it, and
 “doubt whether there be any truth of grace
 “in them, that differ from us in theſe things.
 “Surely, (*ſaith the one ſide*) the indiffer-
 “ency and lawfulness of theſe things, is now
 “ſo clearly manifeſted, as theſe men muſt
 “needs be willfully blind, that do not ſee it:
 “Nay, certainly they cannot chuſe but ſee
 “it well enough, and were it not for a car-
 “nal reſpect to their credit with the people,
 “among whom they have gotten a great
 “Name and Applauſe, by ſtanding out ſo
 “long

"long, they would doubtless conform them-
 "selves, And surely (*saith the other side*)
 "the utter unlawfulness of these Ceremo-
 "nies is now so clearly revealed, that these
 "men must needs be wilfully blind, that
 "see it not. Nay, they do see it well e-
 "nough, and were it not for a carnal re-
 "spect they have unto their worldly peace,
 "and estate, they would never use them;
 "certainly they sin against their Conscience
 "in observing of them: And what truth of
 "grace can there be in them, that are will-
 "fully blind? and for carnal respects doe
 "thus sin against their own Conscience?
 "Thus do both sides grossly and dangerously
 "erre, and sin against their Brethren: *And 1 Cor. 8.*
 "*when ye sin so against the Brethren, ye sin a- 12.*
 "gainst Christ. For the experience of all
 "times, and of this present age, proveth
 "evidently, that there be of both sides, that
 "fear God unfeignedly, and in the whole
 "tenour and course of whose conversation,
 "the life and power of true godliness doth
 "manifestly appear. And if thou do not see
 "this (who-ever thou art, that art most
 "bitter and violent of either side) then art
 "thou certainly thy self most willfully blind.
 "And I do assure thee (in the Name of the
 "Lord, and by good warrant out of his
 "Word) that if thou canst not unfeignedly
 "love every one that truly feareth the Lord
 "(whether he conform, or not conform)
 "If thou canst not bewail and strive against
 "these hard conceits thou hast been wont to
 "enter-

Their misfrarriages towards Saints ;

“entertain against such , thou canst have no
“comfort at all in thine own estate before
God.

Thus far he that was in his time *Englands*
best Preacher. And is the *matter* any whit
amended now ? O ! How have Professors
spoken all manner of evil against those that
have differ'd from them in circumstances ?
Have not they publickly railed one at ano-
ther ? What filthy Names have they given
one another ? Schismatics , Rebels , Divi-
ders , Peace-breakers , enemies to the State,
&c. even as bad as the *Heathens* gave the
Christians ? Have not we been so eager a-
gainst such , that all the peoples time hath
been swallowed up in investives of one par-
ty against another ? Have not we been cool-
ed and blunted , and lost our zeal in matters
of greatest moment , by letting out our
zeal against the supposed errors of our Bre-
thren ?

Back-
biting
them.

3. If we have not been guilty of *Un-saint-*
ing them ; yet how little have we heeded the
commands of God against back-biting ? Thou
Levit. shalt not go up and down , as a Tale-bearer a-
mong the people. Cursed be he that smiteth his
Deutr. Neighbour secretly. When the Apostle would
27. 24. set forth the great abominations of the Gen-
Rom. tiles , he saith , they were whisperers and
29, 30. back-biters. Were there love , it would cover
Prov. all sins. Whom we love , we are wont to
10. 12. commend and praise ; but instead of this, how
do we speak against those that differ from
us , behind their backs , though we speak fair

to their faces? O abominable Hypocrisie!
 Have not some commended an action to the
 face of the man, and presently in another
 place and company censured the same? whom
 we love we would have others to love; but
 by back-biting we seek to draw off others al-
 so from their duty. Herein, O! how do
 we serve the *Devil*, who is the great *media-*
tor of differences? I have oft thought upon
 the Artificial kind of Back-biting in *Bernards*
 time: "When they slander, they will fetch *Videas*
 "deep sighs as if they were much grieved, *pramitti*
 "that others should be so and so guilty, yea *alta sus-*
 "they will say, I am exceedingly sorry for *piria*,
 "such an one, that he should commit so hai- *Dolco*
 "nous a crime: when perhaps it was all the *vehe-*
 "while but a base lying report. Besides *menter*
 "they will charge the Tale-hearer with the *de eo*
 "greatest secrecy, when they will take li- *grande*
 "berty to asperse as far as they have oppor- *diminum,*
 "tunity, they tell the fault only to a Friend, &c.
 "that will tell no body, but Folks, of it. *Bern. in*
 "But why may not he have forfeited the *Cant.*
 "gift of keeping Counsel, as well as thy self? *Serm.*
 "Why shouldst thou think that the *Hearer* 24.
 "will conceal, when thou the *Teller* canst
 "not? And if thou hast a mind the Brothers
 "infirmities should be hid, why dost not
 "thou hide them? Or why dost thou disclose
 "them to one; whom thou suspectest to be
 "no way friendly to the infamed person? If
 "a man of a different perswasion live so
 "humbly, that we are forced to commend
 "them, yet we will surely bring in one Ca-
 "lummy

Their miscarriages towards Saints,

"lunny or other, that shall blot the person,
 "and weaken all our *encomiums* of him:
 "when we have been forced to speak of o-
 "thers good actions, how commonly do we
 "lay in a *But*, something or other, to abate
 "the esteem, that is due: *it were well done, if*
 "*the ends were right, if from good principles,*
 "*if not done in hypocrisie, &c.* and by these
 "insinuations we restrain others from loving
 "proportionably to the merit of the per-
 "son. This is *Doeg*-like: he told the truth;
 "but he insinuated as if *David* had an evil in-
 "tention, and the Priests were in the Con-
 "federacy. Or we add, *we should like him*
 "*well, if he were not thus and thus; but he*
 "*is a leaper, &c. proud, covetous, &c.* At
 feasts, if not in more solemn meetings, what
 liberty have we taken to speak against our
 Brethren? When *Dionisius* feared *Plato*
 would revile him in the Academy among his
 Companions: *God forbid (said Plato) that*
there should be such scarcity of matter to talk of
in the Academy, that they should talk of thee.
 Believe it, we had spent our time better to
 warm one anothers hearts with the love of
 Christ, than to exasperate and inflame the
 Spirits of each other against our Brethren.
 What saith *Plutarch*, another Heathen? *You*
have matter enough at home, and within, to bu-
sie your selves about.

Heark-
 ning to
 back-
 biters.

4. *How easily have we entertained a report,*
and credited it against Brethren of different
perswasions? The love of Mothers makes them
 incredulous as to any charges laid against
 their

their Children; but how seldom have we driven away a back biting tongue with an angry countenance? how have we been Tale-bearers; how have we encouraged the Back-biter to open his pack? how have we received all the defamations he would bring us? how have we credited reports upon hearsay, without any examination? how apt are we to censure and judge before he, which is the Accused; have the Accuser face to face. This was the Romans Law: I wish it were the Christians. Some of you learnt long ago, that it is injustice to determine without hearing both parties. Have we loved our Neighbours Name and Credit, as our own? May we not conclude that God will measure to us, as we have to our Brethren? Is it our wisdom to believe every word? Would not David cut off those whom we embrace? We pretend we are not the first reporters; but are not we glad the report is spread beyond recall? are not we glad that others good names are stoln away? and do not we harbour the stoln-goods? When others set our Neighbours Names on Fire, do not we look on, and gladly warm our selves by it, and cry *Aha! So would we have it?* But when do we go to the defamed Neighbour to hear what Apologie he can make for himself? were we not willing he should fall in our esteems, we would have the Accuser and Accused face to face.

Qui statuit aliquid in parte audita altera; Equum licet statuerit, hanc aequum fuerit. Sen. Trag. Prov. 14. 15. Psal. 101. 5.

How have we amplified and aggravated the offences of differing parties beyond their due

Aggravating their offences.

proportion ? For fifty have not we set down an hundred ? Have not we represented that as done *against light*, which was done *ignorantly* ? and that done *with deliberation*, which was done *rashly* ? We have not made a difference between *raigning sins*, and *humane frailties* : between *sins repented of*, and *not repented of*. How have we been guilty in drawing consequences from our Adversaries Assertions, and fastning such opinions on them, as we knew their Souls abhor'd ? and yet hardly hath one of a thousand retracted these unjust charges, or humbled himself for this great iniquity before God, or Man.

Not silen-
cing
Names of
distinction.

6. *Have we silenced our characterising Names even to this very day ?* These have been the *Devils-bellows*, which he hath put and kept to our mouths, to *blow up* our differences to the greater *flame* : These one calls, *the trumpets of discord*, and a main obstacle to peace.

Not endeavour-
ing peace
as we
ought.

7. *Did we begin to stop breathes besides ?* did not we suffer our wounds to be kept open too long ? and how few yet are there that endeavour to compose the jars and differences that are among us ? When there were bickerings concerning *Moses*, the *Law*, *Circumcision*, and *Sacrifices* ; how doth *Paul* beseech *Enodias* and *Syntiche* ? How few are like one of the Fathers, who was so much affected with the divisions of Christians, that he *profest himself ready to let out his heart-blood to cement them together* ? I hear many outcries against division : and now it is in every

very mans mouth, it is time to agree; But ask them; what they mean by agreement? and you'll find *Conformity* is intended: they would have you to stoop to them, even against Conscience: they will not abate an inch of what they have pretended, and professed as their principle? Few entreat for peace, and those few that do indeed endeavour to hinder the strife of Brethren, fare no better than *Moses*; He is thought to carry on a design for a party that sues for peace, and desires brotherly and amicable Conferences. Many cry for peace, and commend it; but they will not be at cost for it. The cursed principle is still harboured; that it is a dishonourable thing to yield first; but that others must begin to stoop to us: Whereas it is Gods honour, that he stooped to us first. We are loath to sue for peace, and to beg reconciliation with those, that have been more in the offence than we. I find little condescending to remove mistakes and prejudices. If we have once offered terms of peace and reconciliation, we satisfie ourselves therein; but have not pursued and followed after peace: we have not used means upon means: This is a clear evidence of our too much indulging our discords and animosities. When there is a dislocation of one Member of the Natural Body, if one Bone-setter sets it not right, we try another, and leave no means untried, till all be brought into Order again. Sure our hearts are not overcome with the love of peace: I

wish we could say as Luther once in an Epistle to the Pastours of Straesburgh, I pray you be perswaded, that I shall alwayes be as desirous to embrace concord, as I am desirous to have the Lord Jesus propitious to me.

Our differences making us to mis-like good enterprises, and discommend what we have approved, and that in the whole party.

Not confessing their faults one to another; but upbraiding one another as the causes of all our miseries.

8. Have not our differences come to that height, that we have condemned those actions of Dissenting Brethren, which before they dissented from us we approved and commended? Demetrius of Alexandria liked Origen's making himself an Evenuch, till they fell out, and then he wrote against it. Yea, have not we discommended some very good enterprises, merely because they had an hand in them? Thus some confessed that they had liked many of Luthers Reformatiōns, but that so contemptible a Monk should have the honour of beginning them. When men are highly inflamed for some one thing, they will dis-like all the party doth, whilst they are in that passion. Besides have not we been apt to quarrel with, and mis-like whatsoever is done by, a whole society, if we be fall'n out with one of that society? Hath not a whole family somerimes suffered, because we have been angry with one of that Family?

9. How few are there that mutually confess their faults each to other? though doubtless both sides have had their failings in such a time of darkness and temptation? But instead of this are there not mutual upbraidings? if not to the face of each other, yet (which is more criminal) behind each others backs? Do they not impute the cause of all the mi-

series

series felt and feared to such and such disorders of such parties? Who is so ingenious as to confess, and take shame for his own, and his parties miscarriages?

10. *How strong are our memories* (even to this day) *to retain all bitter, & unchristian passages of one party toward another?* And if some have buried them; yet are there not some of the Devils agents, that are raking them out of the dust, to exasperate Spirits afresh, and so to widen our difference?

Not forgetting unkind passages.

11. *How have we suffered Sin to rest upon others?* and why? They are not of our Church. Thou shouldst not deal with a Turk, as thou hast dealt with Christians: nor with a Beast, going astray, as thou hast with thy Brothers-Soul. O! Into what times are we fall'n? That the Jews were kinder to Beasts, than we are to one another: if any go astray, we help them not to return into the right way: if they perish, let them perish, for any care we take to reclaim them: if non-members, they must not be regarded. Thou shouldst not hate thy Brother in thy heart, but reprove him: and not foolishly confine and narrow Brotherhood to thy particular Congregation, and suffer others to be damned, when thou by a faithful reproof mightst have saved them. Whilst you care so little whether God be honoured, or dishonoured by others, your zeal against Sin in your own bosomes, or in your Society, may justly be called in question, whose Image doth it bear? Instead of reproving a Christian, that differs from us, ac-

Suffering Sin to rest on them.

Their miscarriages towards Saints ;

cording to the rule of Christ, for any miscarriage, that we are privy to, have not we let him run on, and then told on the house top, what was done in secret? We hide their imperfections, whom we love, and faithfully, but secretly, admonish them; but have not some pretended an high Friendship to others, on purpose to espy their liberty, that they may afterwards have an occasion to reproach them, and all their party on their account? *He that seeth his Brothers face fowl, and tells him not of it, hath a mind that others should see his spots as well as himself.* And is this love to thy Friends? O! How have we uncovered that, which ingenuous Humanity should have concealed? Can you talk so of your Friends, that are most dear to you?

Restrain-
ing Pray-
er for
them.

12. *Have not we restrained Prayer for such Christians, as have differed from us? Whom we love we pray for: But have not our differences been so great, that we have excluded one another out of our Prayers, unless to reproach each other before the Lord? If any man see his Brother sin a Sin, which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them, that sin not unto death.* How seldom are we very serious and earnest in wrestling with God for others, if in some things divided from us? If we had counted them *Enemies*, we should have so loved them, as to have prayed for them. O that *Abraham* should pray so vehemently for the *Sodomites*, and not we for Saints! That *Samuel* should pray for *Saul*, and not we for the *Lords* *anointed*.

1 John
5. 16.

Mat. 5.
44.

anointed ones ! Have not our differences interrupted not only civil, but all religious communion ? Yea, have not we neglected to pray, not only for dissenting Brethren, but for the reconciling of them ? How few are there, that pray heartily, feelingly, believingly, for the Peace of Hierusalem ; though there are many Promises to encourage us therein, that his Name shall be *Zech.*
one, and they shall worship with one shoulder, *14. 19.*
 and Judah shall not envy Manasseh, nor Manasseh vex Ephraim : And I will give them *Jer. 32.*
one heart, and one way, that they may fear *39.*
me for ever, for the good of them, and of
their children after them ? Should we not also have been encouraged to pray for that, which Christ so affectionately desires ? Will not Petitions be welcome to Heaven for that, which would be the joy of all the Heavenly Host to see effected ? Peace on earth among the Saints would be the joy of God, who is the God of Peace : of Christ, who is the Prince of Peace. May we not confidently pray for what Christ sweat and bleed ?

13. How unready have we been to respect and value the gifts and enoblements of such Christians ? We have neither heartily prayed to God, that they might be useful, with all their Talents, for the good of many : nor blest the Father of Lights for communicating so much to them. *Not prising their gifts, nor blessing God for them.*

14. Hath not the Spirit in us lusted to Envy ? Whom we love, we rejoyce at their gifts and enjoyments ; but hath not a Spirit *Envyng them,*

Their miscarriages towards Saints,

of *Cain* prevailed among us? Have not we envied, if others had greater acceptance with God, than our selves? Have we rejoyced at the gifts and graces of differently-perswaded Brethren, as if they were our own? or have not we (secretly at least) repined at others praises? Have not we been afraid that we and our party have been obscured thereby? Hath not this been evident in our being more backward to speak of their graces, than of their imperfections? Do not we gaze only on the Sun, and call in others to be spectators of it, when ecclipsed? Do not we like *Kites*, pass over the sound *sheep*, and pitch on the weak and dead *Carion*? or like the *Butchers Dog*, not touch the sound *flesh*, but the *offals* and *putrified pieces*? or like *Swine*, pass over the *flowers*, and wallow in the *Mire*? If we know one of a differing Congregation from ours, that hath a blemish, our mouths are full of him; but others graces, and heavenly walks we can pass over in silence.

Not helping them.

15. Have not we refused to help such Christians? We help what we can those whom we really love; But are not we like Spectators in a Tragedy (*Austin* complains of such in his time) who mourn much to see a sad story acted; but let the Play goe on. True pitifull love would express it self by the hand, as well as tongue. We read of the labour of love: love is bountifull. We pretend to love all Saints; but what do we for those that are of different perswasions from ours? If such an one be in Prison, do we vi-

Heb. 6.
10.

1 Cor.

13. 4.

fit

for him? If *Naked*, do we *cloath* him? If *hungry*, do we *feed* him? If we remember all the Lords people, that are in bonds, as if we were bound with them, then doe we really love them. We love our selves, and we are liberal to our selves; we can bestow time, care, estate, good things upon our selves; but not so on divided Brethren. We have words at will, Oyle and butter in our mouths to supply them, *Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled*; but we give not those things, that are needfull. Love will suffer any pains for the sake of the Beloved: So *Paul* loved all the Saints, that *he was willing to spend and to be spent*, like a Candle, to wait himself for their good. Which of us, hath so spent himself? Love will counsel the Beloved, especially if in any straight; But God knows how little others have been beholding to us even this way: possibly we have afterwards insultingly told them, this you should have done, and herein you failed; but as we found them in a Ditch, so we left them, and directed them not to a way of deliverance. The best counsel we can give is for the Soul; but let the divided parties, yea and others, consider seriously and sadly how backward they have been, and are to this day, to advise to the best way for peace, holiness, and glory. If we believe such an undertaking will impair our Neighbours Name, estate, or Soul; yet how slow are we to interpose for the disswading of him from so unhappy an enterprize? I should hardly think that Parent loves his Child well, that sees him

him run over a cliff, and with-holds him not, what he can.

Not sym-
pathi-
zing with
them.

16. *Have not we been so far from helping them, that we have not sympathized with them?* Love is pittifull. When they have been sick, when did we get over our thresholds to enquire how it fared with them? How seldome have we felt their pains? If they be in an error, in a dangerous one, the more we should compassionate them, considering our selves also, who have the seeds of the same errours within us; considering the blindness of our own minds; how we also differ from others in some matters; how it is the Spirit, that leads into truth, &c. But have not some rejoiced, when any of a different perswasion have fall'n into the *Bogs* of *Familisme*, *Ranterisme*, *Quakerisme*, &c. that they may thence draw their absurd inferences against the whole body, whereto such an one was related? Yea how little have we laid to heart the afflictions of any of Gods people? Have not we been as unconcerned in their sufferings in *Germany*, *France*, *Holland*, *Piedmont*, *Ireland*? &c. How seldome have we had any great conflict for those whose faces in the flesh we never saw? Have not we been like *Jacobs* Children, unmercifull enough: sate down to eat and drink, and forgot *Joseph* in the Pit? Have not we had a late instance of this our hard-heartedness, when the *Plague* so forraged in *London*, and the parts adjacent? How little did we mourn with them that mourned? Perhaps fear lest the *Flying Role* might

might visit us, caused us a little to put finger into the eye. I must tell you (I wish I could weeping) that iniquity abounds, and the love of many waxeth cold.

17. *Have not we been so far from sympathizing with them, that we have insulted over them?* Reall love vaunteth not it self, is not puffed up; But how have we vaunted over fall'n Brethren, fall'n into misery: that is bad; but fall'n into sin, that is abominable? How oft have I known some high Professours making it an entertainment, a banquet for their Friends, to speak of the Spots, Vanities, Gestures, &c. of others different in some Opinions or Practices, from them, when their laughture hath given evident proof what contentment they took in the infirmities of their Brethren? *Ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned,* &c. said Paul to the Corinthians: and may not I say so to English Professours? Have not we been worfe than Dives's dogs; seeing they licked the soars of Lazare: whilst we have rub'd and fretted them, and insulted over his miseries?

18. *Have not we very unfaithfully published their secrets?* We are wont to keep the secrets of those we dearly love, especially when they charge us, and we promise so to do; But how many of us are swift to hear, but not slow to speak of what we hear even under the rose? Few faithfull Spirits, that conceal the matter. How many are there that creep into houses, yea farther into bosomes,

Their miscarriages towards Saints,

to know secrets, that they may inflave them to their wills, for fear of their publications, or else when they have got what they can of them, most wretchedly betray the trust reposed in them? This makes me even to cry out, *trust not in a Brother.*

Selfish-
ness.

I Cor.

13. 5.

19. *Have not we been selfish in our love? Charity seeketh not her own.* Observe it, the most love, that is going is *Publican-love*: we are careless of their company, or to have any intimacy with them, from whom nothing is likely to be returned: if a Professour be *rich*, he *hath many Friends*, such as they be; *but the poor is despised of his Neighbour.* O! how base and mercenary is our love? Even your Ministers, to whom you have pretended dear and high affections, yet if they be laid by, or removed at a distance from you, that you cannot have them as a *pleasant song* to you, how strange are you instantly to them? How soon do you forget them? *Judas* may *kiss you*; but he hath a design upon you: *Joab* may *salute*; but he is working nothing but his own base design.

Incon-
stancy.

I Cor.

13. 4.

20. *Hath not our love been inconstant? Real love is abiding*; but do not we quickly exchange Friends? Do we keep them as long as an Almanack, to the end of the year? Do not new-pickt flowers tempt us to throw by the old? *Charity suffereth long*; But how soon is our love quenched? It makes a blaze; but soon is out, soon *kindled*, soon *quench'd*: like Children, won with an Apple, lost with a Nut: How have we been at swords point for

for every trifle? Those *seven ones*, one Body, one Spirit, one Hope, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptisme, one God and Father of all, should have been as so many *quoines* to lock together all parts of the building into one; But alas! every extravagant, or extrinsecal opinion hath broken us and our hearts to pieces. Have not we been humourish, peevish lovers? Our love is dearly bought, and more hardly kept. Humour is like tinder, as soon on fire as touched: no love without conformity in every thing: we could hardly bed, board, or house together, unless we all said the same thing: we loved only whilst pleased, and our humours were not crost; but the least unkindness, the least difference, though our agreemenss were more by hundreds than our differences) would quench, or at least abate, our love. *Charity is not easily provoked.* And to *fulfil the law of love* its requisite in the Apostles Judgement, that we *bear one anothers burthens.* But O! ever since I can remember, what a rigid, imperious, and tyrannical commanding of an Uniformity in every punctilio hath there been? Though the pretence be love to Christs Church; yet if men would consult their own hearts, 'tis love of their own power, and rule, and Lordship over their Brethren: and therefore the same party of men, when in the Saddle, when uppermost, have cried for this rigid Conformity, *away with cursed tolleration*, &c. and when reduced and brought lower, have as much commended *Charity*,

1 Cor.

13. 5.

Gal. 6.

1.

Charity, Love, Forbearance in matters less momentous.

The
greatness
of this
evil.

Now, when these things are *thus* amongst us, shall we sit still in *silence* and *stupidity*, and suffer the *sweet* and *soft* fire of *love* quite to *expire*, and the *wild*-fire of *passion* and *contention* to *spread* and *prevail*, without moving a *tongue* or *hand* towards the *repressing* of the *one*, and *reviving* of the *other*? This were enough to make the *dumb* to *speak*; and therefore may *justify* my *writing*, when I may not *speak*, yea my *expatiating* a little, in *venting* my *thoughts* about this *great* evil, and the *desires* of my *heart* to *redress* it.

In its disobedience.

See Williams transcendency of Christ's love.

Chap. 9. Sect. 3, 4, 5. John 13. 33, 34, 35. 14. 12. 15. 12. 17.

Is it nothing to us, that hereby we are in a special manner guilty of disobedience to Jesus Christ? That all Christians would love one another, was our Lord Jesus his dying charge, which he frequently inculcated, sweetly insinuated, and powerfully enforced it as a Commandement, not a bare advice and counsel: It is a Commandement of Christ's own prescribing, *A Commandement I give unto you*: It is a Commandement given, as a special Love-token, in his last Will and Testament: It is a new Commandement, *A new Commandement I give unto you*: It is a most excellent Commandement, in a new Edition, corrected and amended, from the false glosses of the Scribes and Pharisees, and enlarged from his own example; Before it was only, *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self*; now it is, *Love one another, as I have loved you*: This new Commandement is not once only

only given, but given again, and again, and again, by our dying Lord, to intimate, that as he had one Disciple, who went by the name of the Disciple whom Jesus loved: So he would have a darling Commandement, and that this should be it, Love one another; Yea, he calls it, Those things, as if this one thing were all things, and disobedience to this Commandement, were disobedience to all.

Is it nothing to us, that hereby, as much as in us lies, we make the Prayer of Christ of none effect? Christ knew the evil of heart-burnings and divisions, of wrath and bitterness against one another (though we do not) and therefore having preached up love among his Disciples on earth, he sets upon praying down Union from his Father in Heaven, and what he insisted most upon in his Sermon, that he enlargeth most upon in his Prayer. And now I am no more in the World, but these are John 17. in the World, and I come to thee, holy Father, 11, 21, keep through thine own name, those whom thou 22, 23. hast given me, that they may be one, as we are: That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: That the World may believe, that thou hast sent me: And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them: that they may be one, even as we are one. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one. and that the World may know, that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

Crossing
Christ's
Prayer.

Throw-
ing off
Christ's
Livery.

Is it nothing to us, that hereby we throw off John Christ's distinguishing Livery? By this shall all 13. 35. men

men know that you are my Disciples, if you have love one to another. He doth not say, Hereby you shall be my Disciples; but hereby it shall be known: Nor doth he say, Hereby I shall know; nor hereby you shall know; but hereby shall others know: Nor doth he say, Hereby they shall guess and conjecture; but hereby they shall know, as by a sure and infallible sign: Nor doth he say, Hereby some, a very few, shall know this great secret; but hereby all men shall know: Nor doth he say, Hereby all men shall know, that you seem to be my Disciples; but that you are so indeed.

Representing
Christ as
an Impos-
ture.

Is it nothing to us, that hereby we make the Jewes and Heathens look on Christ as an Impostour? How can they look upon him otherwise, whilst they see his Coat so full of seams, yea his Body so full of rents? Hereby we hinder the World from being convinced that Christ is sent of God: Christ therefore John 17. prayed, that His might be one, that the 21, 23. World may know, that God sent him.

Making
Christs
death of
none ef-
fect.

Is it nothing to us, that hereby we make (as much as in us lyes) the Cross of Christ of none effect, and his blood to be shed in vain? Christ not only preach'd up Love, and prayed for it, but also paid for it. As he went from preaching up Love on Earth by his Sermon, to pulling it down from Heaven by Prayer: So he went from praying to paying for it; and the Ephes. 2. Price which he laid down for it, was his 14, 15, Blood, saith a late ingenuous Writer. For 16. he is our Peace, who hath made both one, &c.

Having

having abolished in his flesh the enmity, &c. for to make in himself of twain, one new man, so making peace. And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body, by the Cross. Shall Christ dye to break down partition walls: and will we dare to keep them up? Shall he shed his blood for peace? and shall we imploy our wit and interest to blow the trumpet to War?

Is it nothing to us, that hereby we make ^{Calling} Jews and Pagans call in question the truth of ^{in questi-} Gods promises? What can they think of those ^{on Gods} promises (that the Wolf and the Lamb shall ^{Promises.} feed together, they shall not hurt, nor destroy ^{Isa. 65.} in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord. That ^{25.} the Wolf also shall dwell with the Lamb, and ^{11. 6.} the Leopard shall lie down with the Kid: and the Calf and the young Lyon, and the fatling together, and a little Child shall lead them.) When the Lambs cannot fold together without pushing at one another.

Is it nothing to us, that hereby we grieve ^{Grieving} our dear Lord Jesus, and the ever blessed Spi- ^{Christ,} rit? May we not easily imagine what a grief ^{and the} it is to the head, to see the members of his ^{Spirit.} body renting and tearing each other? to see heirs of the same hope, those that lye together in the same bosom of Election, and whose Names are on his Breast, and whom he presents before his Father together in Heaven, to be thus broken asunder on earth? O! me thinks if we had any love to Jesus Christ, we should study to be of one affection. What Luther said once to the Ministers of Norim-
A a berg

berg is very considerable : Suppose (said he) you saw Jesus Christ standing bodily in the midst of you , and thus bespeaking you , *What do you , O my dear Children ! whom I have Redeemed by my blood , that you might mutually love one another . ----- There is no danger in your difference , but there is much in your dissention : Do not thus sadden my Spirit : do not thus spoil the holy Angels of their joy in heaven : Am not I more to you than all your matters of difference .* How can we expect the company of the Spirit of grace and peace , whilst such fiery contentions are amongst us . Were the Disciples quarrelling and contending , when the Holy Ghost fell on them ? No ,

Acts 2.

1.

Psal.

133. 1.

*Rasing
Sion.*

Mat.

12. 25.

Making

real

Saints

weary to

support

the

World

any

longer.

Is it nothing to us , that hereby we do (what in ut lyes) to rase Sion , even to the foundation thereof ? The stones support the building , by being coupled together . How can the house stand , when the stones are severed , when not a stone is left joyned to a stone ? Every Kingdom divided against it self , is brought to desolation : and every city or house divided against it self , shall not stand .

Is it nothing to us , that hereby we make re- all Saints , the pillars of the World , weary of staying in the World ; to support it any longer ? It was the sight of the divisions among Christians,

Christians, that made *Grynæus, Melancthon, Serapellus*, those pious and precious Souls weary of earth, and to wish and desire the wings *Psa. 55.* of a Dove, that they might fly away, and be at 6. rest in that place, where there is a rest remaining for the people of God, as from all other *Hebr.* evils, so from this of divisions and dissensions 4. 9. among Brethren. It was the conjecture of one, that as Gods first Judgement against the old World was by Water, against the heat of Lust: so his last Judgement upon the World that now is, will be by Fire against the coldness of Love. If this be true, how do we hasten the great and terrible day by our coldness in Love one towards another?

Is it nothing to us, that hereby we gratify the Devil, rejoyce the hearts of the wicked, and justify their reproaches of Saints? The great Devil, rejoycing the wicked, and Justifying their reproaches of Saints! The great stratagem of Hell is to promote our differences, and to keep us from Union: all the bones they throw among us are to set us by the ears: the Devil knows that Societies of Christians are immortal, if they do not kill themselves by Division: *Divide & impera, Divide them, and rule them* is a maxime in Hell, and among the Antichristian party. If ye bite and devour one another a Consumption will be the consequent. Why should we be employed in the Devils work? Hath he not instruments and tongues enough of his own? O! how doth Antichrist yet ground by the Animosities and Divisions among Christians? Certainly what *Tacitus* saith of some in his time, we may of the *Papists* and all our For-

Gratify-

ing the

Devil,

rejoycing

the wick-

ed, and

Justifying

their re-

proaches

of Saints!

Gal. 5.

15.

raign Enemies, Nihil spei, nisi per discordias habent. All their hopes of ruining us arise from our homebred discords and divisions. Were all the Arrows in one bundle, they would by tryal and experience find it next to an impossibility to break them. Methinks the proud boasts of the *Man of Sin* should make us bury all our discords: were we but of *one heart* before God, and *uniting* our *Prayers*, the *Mountains* would become *Plains*, yea the *seven Hills* among the rest. Sure we do not consider where, and among whom we are. Are we not in the world, where *Satan* rules? Shall the Children quarrel in their Enemies quarters? *Abraham* sues for peace upon this, as a taking consideration, that *we are Brethren and the Perrizzite dwell in the land.* Wicked men are Spectators of our feuds and discords. The very Heathen have calmed the mutinies of their Souldiers, by saying, *your Enemies yonder behold your mutinous behaviour.* What one said prophetically some years ago, I cannot but recall: that *unless God did stir up some in the Protestant Churches, and cloth them with a mighty Spirit to accommodate our differences, the end of them may be, that our Enemies will laugh, when we shall weep.* Have we not Enemies enough, but must we be dogged and cruel to one another? We say the Fire burns the hotter for the cold weather: Would to God the *Anriperistasis* were blessed, that the cold abroad, the oppositions against us, may intend our affections the more to God, to his wayes,

Gen. 13.
7.

Europe
Specu-
lum. p.
173.

to his people. And are not the wicked justified in their reproaches of the Saints, whilst they do but write after our Copy?

*Is it nothing to us, that hereby we are per- Perjury
jured, yea often perjured, as oft we have re-
ceived the Communion?* "Christians (saith
our great Usher) should remember, that
as oft as they come to the Lords table, so
oft do they enter into new bonds of peace,
and tye themselves with firmer knots of
love together, this blessed Communion
being a Sacred Seal, not only of the Uni-
on, which we have with our head by
faith, but also of our conjunction with the
other members of the body, by love.

Lastly, *Is it nothing to us, that hereby we Hindring
hinder the forgiveness of our own iniquities & pardon,
How can we hope we shall be forgiven, if
we forgive not one another? How can we
look that Scripture in the face, if ye for- Mat. 6.
give men their trespasses, your Heavenly Fa- 14, 15.
ther will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not
men their trespasses, neither will your Father
forgive your trespasses? Or that, with what
measure you mete, it shall be measured to you Mat. 7.
again? Would we have God deal with us, as 2.
we deal with our Brethren? These, and such
like considerations, have made some, even of
the Episcopal persuasion, to complain for
want of love, and to sigh for more Charity Bishop
towards Christians, though of different per. Reyn of
swasions: "That in the case of unavoidable the peace
differences among good men (saith one) of the
Church;
there should be no more mutual charity, p. 16, 17.*

Bishop
Gaudens
Serm.
Printed
1660.

Bishop
Hall's
Serm. be-
fore his
Majesty,
1641.

Matth.
II. 19.

“ meekness, moderation, tolerance, and hu-
 “ manity expressed, &c. this is a lamentati-
 “ on, and will be for a lamentation. Be-
 “ tween the *Episcopal, Presbyterian*, and
 “ *dependent* parties (saith a second) much
 “ of the acideness and sharpness of the hu-
 “ mour would be alayed, if this policy of
 “ charitable censure and interpretation were
 “ applyed on all sides, &c. I should be glae
 “ to see the beams of this candour, this kind-
 “ ness, this charity, shine in all faces from all
 “ sides, that the *Shiboleths* of different dia-
 “ lects and designs, &c. might be laid aside
 “ by being all for Christ, &c. A third pre-
 “ sseth to a charitable construction of each
 “ others acts and intentions; because there
 “ is nothing in the world, which may not be
 “ taken with either hand, whether the right
 “ hand of favour, or the left of malice. We
 “ see the Son of God himself, in whom the
 “ Prince of this World could find nothing,
 “ yet was exposed to mis-construction, Be-
 “ hold a *Glutton*, &c. Good Lord! what un-
 “ charitable censures are men apt to pass up-
 “ on each other: Let a man be strict and
 “ austere in moral and divine duties, though
 “ never so peaceable, he is a *Puritan*, and
 “ every *Puritan* is an *Hypocrite*. Let him
 “ be more free, and give more scope to his
 “ conversation, though never so consciona-
 “ ble: he is a *Libertin*: Let him make scru-
 “ ple of any innovated form, he is a *Schis-*
 “ *matick*: Let him stand for the anciently
 “ received Rites and Government, he is a
 “ time-

time-serving Formalist. ----- Let me tell
you he is right, that hath a right heart to
his God, what forms soever he is for. The
Kingdome of God doth not stand in meats and
drinks, in stuffs, or colours, or Fashions,
in Noyse or Gestures: it stands in Holi-
ness and Righteousness, &c. Let us study
now, not to widen, or gall, or ranckle; but
how to salve, and heal, &c. I shall conclude
this Chapter with beseeching, yea conjuring
you in the words of the Apostle Paul to the
Philippians: If there be therefore any consol-
ation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any
fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowells, and
mercies; Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like-
minded, having the same love, being of one ac-
cord, of one mind.

Phil. 2.
1, 2.
O quam
sacro
fascino
usus est?

*Ipsa suada credo, si loqui posset, not potuisset impatiens,
ubi quot verba, tot tela, quae nimium animos nostros per-
cellant, &c. Mortoni sent. de pace procuranda inter E-
uangel. p. 25.*



CHAP. XXXV.

Church-Members
miscarria-
gos. *The faults of Church-Members towards
those of their particular Congregations.*

useless-
ness and
unfaith-
fulness. 1. **Y**OU have Professed in your *Creed* to be-
lieve the *Communion of Saints* : You
have been admitted to the *Priviledges* of this
Communion : you thought it not safe, or good
for man to be alone ; to live retired from the
Society of Saints : you have been inrolled a-
mong the *Saints in Jerusalem*, which came
down from above : you have with some *Solem-*
nity engaged your selves to be faithfull to the
Souls of your Brethren : and yet what an un-
profitable *Hermit* hast thou been in *Zion* ? Like
a wild-beast thou comest out of thy *Den* for
thy prey, to feed upon the *Mountains of Spices*,
to enjoy the provisions of Gods house ; but
immediately thou retirest, and art no way ser-
viceable to the *Body*. It is a wonder to me,
how *Christians* can content themselves with
the *Priviledges* of Gods house, and neglect the
mutual duties, that are incumbent on them.
A learned man complains of many *Ministers*,
that they are but *Traditional-Preachers* : and
I fear there are too many *Traditional-Christi-*

us; who are very zealous for the practising
 of some Duties, which they have received
 from their *Fore-fathers*, whilst they can
 over-look many express Commandements,
 obliging them to take care, as *Members* of
 the *Natural Body* do, each for other. The
 Apostle tells us, that the *meanest Members* in
 the Church yet are necessary. But alas! How
 many are there, who shut up their *Light* in
 dark-lanternes? who immure themselves
 within their own walls? who are so involved
 in worldly *businesses*, and have so little care
 and zeal for the house of God, that they no
 way profit, no way edifie their Brethren?
 How can such over-look those plain express
 requiries of Christ by his Apostle? Let us
 therefore follow after the things which make for *Rom.*
 peace, and things wherewith one may edifie
 another. Wherefore comfort (or exhort) your
 selves together, and edifie one another, I wish I
 could add, as the Apostle doth, even as also ye
 do. For as much as ye are zealous of spiritual
 gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of
 the Church. Let all things be done to edifying.
 From whom (i. e. Christ) the whole body fitly
 joyned together, and compacted by that which
 every joynt supplyeth, according to the effectual
 working in the measure of every part, maketh
 increase of the body, unto the edifying of it self
 in love. Let no corrupt communication proceed
 out of your mouth; but that which is good to the
 use of edifying, that it may minister grace un-
 to the hearers. Let every one of us please his
 Neighbour, for his good to edification. For
 even

14. 19.

1 Thes.

5. 11.

1 Cor.

14. 12,

26.

Ephes.

4. 16.

v. 29.

Rom.

15. 2, 3.

- even Christ pleased not himself. But exhort one another daily, while it is called to day, lest any of you be hardened, through the deceitfulness of sin. And let us consider one another to provoke unto love, and unto good works. Not forsaking the assembling of our selves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as we see the day approaching. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. None are excluded: it is every mans work. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. Look diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springing up, trouble you, and thereby many be defiled. If they do not over-look, how dare they contemn, all these Commandements of our Lord Jesus Christ? How can they look upon themselves as no way concerned in these duties? It is a Lamentation, and should be for a Lamentation, that so many Church-Members, like Birds of prey, flye alwayes alone; and through spiritual sloth, through a lothness to displease, through want of charity and pity to the Souls of their Brethren, suffer them to perish in carelessness, sensuality, formality, &c. rather than they will labour to quicken, restore and save them. An Ingrosser is hateful to men; But of how much sorer punishment shall ye be thought worthy, who ingross your graces, your gifts, your experiences, where-with a Church of Christ might be edified? Every man is a Steward, (Give an account of thy
- Hebr. 3. 13.
10. 24.
25.
Phil. 2. 3.
4. 5.
Hebr. 12. 15.

But you are Stewards in an *special* manner: You are Stewards of the *treasures* of the Spirit, which are given to profit *withall*. How dare ye *hide your Talents* in a *napkin*? You have a greater trust committed to you, than others have: You have *Souls* committed to your care; for *Church-Members* are to *care* even *naturally* one for another. If God hath two *Servants*, and he *intrusts* one with his *Lumber*, the other with his *Children*; and if *both* be *negligent*: sure he shall suffer the *highest indignation* from the Lord, who *neglects* the *Children*. What are you *afraid*, you shall have the *less light*, the *less grace*, the *less comfort* from Christ, for that others share with you? And therefore will ye turn *Ingrossers* and *Monopolists*? O! Know the more *useful* you are to invite the *Children* to their Father, the more you your selves will be *enriched* and supplied; and whilst you are *dividing* your *loaves*, God will act at a *wonderful* rate for you: the *bread* will *multiply*: you shall *receive*, whilst you are *disbursing*: your *light* and *heat* will *increase* by your holy *dispensing* it.

2. *How is godly conference neglected even among Church members?* What! are you ashamed of your God? is the speaking of *grace* and *glory* some kind of disparagement to your tongues? When Saints come together, time, precious time is devoured in *back-biting*, in *undue*, *unseasonable* *conversing* of *absent* persons, who are not capable of making their defence, or else in *foolish* *impertinent*

Neglect-
ing godly
Con-
ference;

pertinent discourses of worldly matters. Few, like the *Disciples* in their journey to *Emmaus*, discourse of such matters, as Christ himself joyns with them in, and causeth their hearts to burn: When do you warm one anothers hearts, and fit each other to enter into *Communion* with God in *secret*? How do many complain of you, that their hearts are estranged from God by *converses* and *intimacies* with you, and that they loose their *affections* by keeping up *correspondencies* with you? and therefore count it their *wisdom* to retire into their *closets*, rather than misspend precious hours in foolish communications with such barren, frothy, empty Professors. How many weak Christians are there, who are not acquainted with the wiles of Satan, and they sit down *pensive* and *dejected*, thinking no condition like theirs, and conclude hereupon that they are none of Gods Children, whom (if you were spiritual, pitiful, active, and free to acquaint them with your own experiences, that you have been tempted as they) you might succour under their temptations, and comfort with the comforts, where-with you have been comforted, and ease them by hearkning to their doubts and complaints, and shewing them a way how to deliver their Souls; Were you of a *Christ-like* Spirit, you would not break these bruised reeds, nor quench these smoking flaxes; but rather blow up their graces, and labour to scatter and disperse those fogs and mists, which over-cloud their Souls: you should

the eyes to the blind; but you are not: you should be of a merciful Spirit to all Souls: more especially to the Souls of all Saints, most especially to the Souls of those Saints, to whom you are peculiarly related; but you are not. In the old Law God took care of *Exod.* Affes: if they lay under a burthen, Israel was *23. 5.* to help them. Doth God take care for beasts? *1 Thes.* and will not ye for men, for Saints, for the *5. 14.* redeemed of the Lord? God requires of you, *1 Cor.* that you comfort the feeble minded. The ma- *12. 7.* nifestation of the Spirit is given to every man *Mal.* to profit withall. Christ expects his own with *3. 16.* increase. They that feared the Lord spake of-
 en one to another, to comfort one another with the promises of God made to his people, against the flourishing of the wicked, and overflowing of ungodliness: and the Lord hearkned and heard it, and a book of Remembrance was written before him; &c. the Lord book't that good service, he pur it up- *Nihil de* on record; But though the Lord hearkneth *Scriptu-* and hears, yet he seldom finds us so employ- *ris, nihil* ed: our neglects are sealed up in his bag. *I de salute* pray God we may lay it to heart, repent, *Anima-* and reform. Bernards complaint may justly *rum agi-* be revived: Not a word of the Scriptures, *tur; sed* nor-thing of the Salvation of the Soul; but trifles *nugæ &* and toys, laughier, and words as light as the *risus, &* wind, eat up the time. I know there have *verba* been too many *Uzza's* amongst us, who have pro-
 had an itching desire to be fingring of the *feruntur* Ark, thinking of themselves more highly than in-
 venthey ought to think, and like the ambitious *tum.* Sons of Levi, taking too much upon them,
 whereby

Jude
v. 20.

Col. 3.
16.

whereby the *Ministry* hath suffered much contempt. The Lord forgive these daring *Phaetons*, who have set the world in a flame hereby: But let not us run from one extreme into another. Let us give to the Ministry their due; and yet not neglect to *build up* our selves in our *most holy faith*. Mutual duties should be exercised between Christian and Christian: The Apostle is expresse for it in the places already quoted: I shall adde one more, *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another.* O! if God would be with me so far, as to make me an instrument to prevail with you to go, and visit one another, and stir up one another, that *knowing the terrors of the Lord, you may perswade men.* O bewail thy unserviceableness, thy private spiritedness, thy want of love and bowels to others; especially now, when the *Ministerial* help fails to such a degree, and when there is so great an *Apostasie*. Sure, then is no time, wherein *Christian-fellowship* is more called for, and wherein it may be more profitable, than at this time; But alas! How are the *wise* as well as the *foolish, Virgins asleep*, generally secure, without action, no way usefull to each other, no more than they are, who are fast asleep in their beds of rest? O! how few are there like *Jonathan* and *David*? how few enter into a brotherly promise to exhort one another, to call one another to account, to tell one another their fears, to know of one another their growth

in Religion? We are proud, and loath to have our nakedness appear: yea some of us have few stories to tell of Gods goodness and bounty to our Souls, and we hate a discovery, how low, earthly, vain; backsliding we are: Hence reserved to each other; But God will bring forth the hidden works of dishonesty.

3. *How is Fraternal correction neglected or Not ad-*
spoyl'd in the managing? Some totally neglect monish-
 reproving their Brethren: Gallio-like, they ing, or not
 little care for these things, they are little aright,
 concern'd whether God be honoured, or
 dishonoured.

Others delay admonition. The Flesh is Either
 backward to this self-denying work, and so neglect-
 ing it alto-
 the many weighty circumstances, which should gether, or
 bring the Offendor to Repentance, are forgot: delaying
 The Offendor is also hardened in his Sin. He it.
 thinks by thy silence, thou art altogether like
 unto him: so he judgeth of Gods silence,
 these things hast thou done, and I kept silence, Psal. 50.
 thou thoughtest I was altogether such an one as 21.
 thy self: so he judgeth of thy silence. It's
 much easier to fetch out a spot of inck from a
 cloth the day it is stained, than afterwards.
 Sin like a Mole, will quickly bury it self, and
 the longer let alone, the harder it is to dig it
 up. The longer a disease is let alone, the har-
 der cured: Cronical diseases are seldome a
 credit to the Physitian. Besides if you neg-
 lect the Reproof this day or hour, perhaps by
 the next he will commit the same Sin again; for
 either he knows it not to be a sin, or in case
 he

he knows it, yet every new act doth strengthen the habit of sin. * It is the nature of sin to blind the Mind, to stupifie the Conscience, and to harden the heart. *Exhort therefore*

Heb. 3. one another dayly, while it is called to day, lest
 13. *any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.* If the sinner add sin to sin, put that to your account for neglecting the Ordinance of God for his reducement: If he loseth the favour of God, and neglects hereupon all private communion with the Lord, put that to thy account: If at length he becomes impudent in sin, so that, like a *Bedlam*, he feels not the pricks of sharp admonition, put all this to your account, because you have delayed to cure, to heal, to save the Soul of your Brother. A timely reproof might have saved a Soul, and covered a multitude of sins. Besides, *have you time at your command*, that you with *Felix*, will do your duty at a *more convenient season*? May't not thou dye? or the *Offendor* dye? and both in sin, thou in the sin of *Omission*, and he in the sin of *Commission* unrepented of, before the day comes, wherein thou art resolved to tell him roundly of his fault? Why art not thou trembling with fear of blood-guiltiness? Is Soul-murther no sin with thee? Or *have you the Holy Ghost at command*? Without the Holy Spirits assistances and concurrence, your labour will be in vain, you will get a blot by reproving, the delinquent will flye in your face, hate you for telling the truth, he will add sin unto sin, and perhaps put you into a
 flame

flame too : and must the Holy-Ghost dance attendance on you ? If you observe his hour, you must go presently whilst the wound is fresh and bleeding ; but if you neglect his call , it is a question, whether your hour will be Gods.

Others miscarry in reprov^{ing}. Some reprov^e, Or miscarrying but not privately; though Christ be so expresse carrying for it, *If thy Brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone* : though the Law of Charity binds proving privately, us to cover our Brothers nakedness, as much as *Matth.* we can. *Love covereth all sins*; yet some Doeg- *18. 15.* like backbite their Neighbour, and tell it to *Prov.* every one save him, who should hear of it. *10. 12.* How few modestly, affectionately and humbly, in the most private manner communicate their fears of sins, decays, and infirmities to the supposed delinquents? Are not most too forward sinfully and wickedly to divulge their undue suspicions to others, whereby the names of some suffer, Souls lye neglected, prejudices and heart-burnings are promoted, Schisme is made in the body of Christ. Though the Law of Wisdome bind us not to use more means than needs must, if gentle private reproofs will serve to reclaim, not to blazon infirmities, yet Professours through pride, envy, want of Charity, at least want of wit, publish on the house top what is done in a corner. Herein we do, as we hate to be dealt with, were it our own concernment : Hereby we make the Offendor to hate us, and beget in him due prejudices

Their miscarriages towards

ces against us, viz. that we thirst to draw the blood of his Name: yet how many Church-Members are peccant herein? It will be hard to make him believe thou comest to *heal* his *Soul*, if thou hast already *wounded* his *Name*. Have not some Church-Members been for bringing it immediately to the Church? Hereby innumerable evils ensue, many are grieved, many offended, the party that is impeached stands on his guard, pleads for his sin, extenuates it, or is strengthened in his sin by the uncharitable proceeding, and irregular acting of the Brother, who first took cognizance of the miscarriage, and so *Judah justifies Samaria*.

Reprove-
ing self-
ishly.

Others reprove that those injuries that have been offered to them may be recompenced, rather than that their Brothers Soul may be healed, and it appears herein, if the wrong done them may be remedied, little do they heed, whether there be any other Repentance. They reprove not to gain their Brother; but to make gain of him: and therefore Jebu-like, they drive furiously in their own cases, but in Gods they are dumb and dull enough.

Reprove-
ing only
for dispu-
table
things.

Other busie-bodies would be thought very tender of Christs honour, they tithe Mint and Annise, &c. they reprove such things as are disputable, and neglect to reprove, where there are too many just accusations to lay in. They will be very severe in censuring their Brethren for their Hair, Cloathes, or some controverted recreations; and yet let them alone to live in worldliness, sensuality, lukewarmness, pride, sloth, &c.

Others

Others are so Magisterial in their reproofs. Reproves as if they had forgotten that they are in the *ing Ma-* body, as if they had no native corruption *gisteri-* remaining in them, they want the Spirit of *ally.* meekness, they have forgotten the Apostles *Brethren*, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye *Gal. 6.* which are spiritual, restore such an one in the *1.* Spirit of meekness, &c. O! how haughtily do some carry it towards offending Brethren. I wish you would fling the first stone at your selves. If you are not guilty of the same offence, yet you are of others, at least you have the seed of the same Sin within you. O that offending Brethren might know that it is only Conscience of duty, that brings you to them, and that it is love to their Souls puts you upon such displeasing work to your flesh; But wo and alas! How few will condescend? The work is not managed with that humility as it ought, and therefore no Brother is gained.

Others are so light, frothy, and unserious in Reproves *this business, that they spoyl all.* They do not *ing light-* invoke God to accompany them in the *ly.* work, they do not cry out, *who is sufficient?* They forget it is Soul-work they are employ- ed in, they forget how abortive such labours have been, they do not set upon it with that fear and trembling, which they should. Few *rebuke with authority*, as having Gods Glory, and mens Everlasting Salvation in their eye; and hence, when they come off from this work, their Conscience smites them, that they have been no more seri-

Their miscarriages towards

ous and fervent in a matter that concerns life and death.

Few continue their admonitions, and follow them, till the Delinquent be brought to confession, repentance and amendment. We soon tire, and put the ill names of *Dogs* and *Swine* upon our offending *Brethren*, to excuse our sloth, and to take off that diligence about their Souls, which their dulness, and hardness of heart calls for. We should in meekness instruct them, though they oppose themselves: We should bear with their present stubbornness and abuses, and wait if God peradventure will give them repentance: We forget how many years God waited on us, though we were stout, stubborn and refractory, how patient and long-suffering he was unto us. Though the more we love, the less we are beloved; though men even flye in our faces: yet we should do as our Lord, and his Ministers, not presently shake off the dust of our feet against them.

4. How few behave themselves Christianly under Reproof? When men come to you from the great God, to discharge the duties they owe to your Souls, your behaviour is such, that none will meddle with such Patients, to dress their wounds, if the Lord had not charged them with this Commission.

How few receive a Reproof kindly and affectionately? This makes me fear, that there are more Hypocrites in Churches, than we are aware of. It is a great mercy to be re-
proved,

Putting
an end to
Reproof
too soon.

Not
bearing
Reproof
Christi-
anly.

Not lo-
vingly.

proved, *As many as I love, I rebuke.* To sin against Reproof, is aggravated wickedness. *The revolvers are profound to make slaughter, though I have been a rebuker of them all.* It is an argument of hatred, not to reprove, *Thou shalt not hate thy Brother in thine heart, thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy Neighbour, &c.* Yet how are they counted turbulent, pragmatistical, void of affection, rigid and censorious, who will not let them goe on in their sin. *He that hates reproof, shall surely dye.* There is not a sadder Omen, that God hath an endless controversie with thee. *I know (saith the Prophet to Amaziah) the Lord hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast not hearkened to my reproof.* Others seem to hearken to the Reprover, and give him verbal thanks for his plain dealing; but from that day their hearts boyl inwardly, and they are fill'd with prejudice, which will expresse it self, when ever it meets with a fair opportunity. *How few do engage some Friend, to be a faithful Monitor to them, to be open-hearted to them, in telling them their faults?* We are so overrun with self-love, that we think no slander by can discern so much as we; and we are so unwilling to be censured, that we stand aloof from having such a Looking-glass near us, to reflect our spots to us: Few, with David, would count it a kindness, for the righteous to smite them.

How few do amend upon a solemn serious reproof? How few retire to their Closets,

Not obediently,

and there upon their knees bless God for emboldning any to tell them of their Sins, and there beg pardon and strength to reform, and enter into a religious vow by the grace of God to amend whatever is amiss?

Minding
only the
pleasing
of them
selves.

Rom.

15. 1, 2,

3.

5. *Most Professours seek to please themselves and not their Neighbour.* A man would think they never read, *we that are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please our selves. Let every one please his Neighbour for his good to edification; For even Christ pleased not himself, &c.* Professours are self-willed, they will walk to the utmost of their liberty, and if others be offended, they little care for grieving and stumbling their weak Brethren. They will tell you in the pride of their hearts and loftiness of their Spirits, the weak must be satisfied: But what if they cannot? O! how opposite are Professours to the Apostles condescending frame? They think that in different circumstantial things the weak should follow the strong, and therefore slight what they think of their actions. But what saith the Apostle?

Gal. 5.

13.

1 Cor.

8. 1.

Use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh. Knowledge puffeth up, but Charity edifyeth. "A firm and full knowledge of our liberty in things indifferent, (saith a learned man) if it be seperated from Charity, is apt to swell the mind with Pride, and make men to despise, and set at naught weak, doubting, and scrupulous Brethren; but Charity is carefull to avoyd what may stumble the weak, and cause them to fall into Sin, and

"and therefore judge this rather, that no man
 "put a stumbling or occasion to fall in his Bro. *Rom.*
 "thers way by the use of indifferents. *Hast* 14. 13.
 "thou faith, concerning the lawfulness of 22.
 "the use of things indifferent? (for of them
 "the Apostle speaks) have it unto thy self
 "before God, make not a vain publication
 "thereof, to the exasperating, grieving, or
 "stumbling of the weak, who may by thy
 "example, even against Conscience, use
 "the same liberty that thou dost, and so
 "through thy knowledge shall thy weak Bro- *I Cor. 8.*
 "ther perish, i. e. thy using this liberty hath *II.*
 "a tendency to destroy him. You may think
 "this is no great matter; But the same A-
 "postle informs you, that you hereby sin a- *I Cor. 8.*
 "gainst Christ, you destroy the work of God, *II, 12.*
 "the Soul of thy Brother, and no man on *Rom. 14.*
 "earth can privilege you from the wrath of *20.*
 "God, if you destroy them with your meats
 "(with the use of your liberty) for whom
 "Christ dyed, and therefore the Apostle
 "professeth, if meat make my Brother to of- *I Cor. 8.*
 "fend, I will eat no flesh, while the world *13.*
 "standeth, lest I make my Brother to offend.
 O! that men were so humble as Paul, in the
 condescension of their Charity; But alas!
 All men seek their own things: if they are sa-
 tisfied concerning the lawfulness of the
 things, they look no farther: they little
 mind the souls of their Brethren; but are se-
 curing themselves some outward peace, and
 earthly advantages. Few naturally care for the
 good of others, for the glory of God, and the
 edification of their Brethren. B b 4 How

Valuing
Chri-
stians by
externals.

6. *How are Christians valued and preferred by externals, rather than by internals? By gold-rings, by outward honours and privileges, rather than by their graces? They who should have most of your esteem, love and respect, have least. A rich Formalist's company is more prized, than an humble, mortified, poor Christian's. The miscarriage that was in the Apostles dayes, is descended to this age, and is a blot upon many of the Professours of it: O my Brethren!*

Jam. 2. 1. Have not the Faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. How are mens judgements blinded by some external glory and appearance, so that a little in a great, rich, honourable man, is counted much; and much grace in a poor man is despised, over-looked, and accounted but little?

1 Cor. 11. 22. How do the rich contemn the poor? How are the poor neglected in visits? But a rich, though formal Professour, shall have many Friends. How common is it for the rich to enjoy Ordinances together, and exclude the poor? You goe to the houses of the rich, but seldome goe over the threshold of the poor: and yet what said Christ to him that bade him? When thou makest a Dinner or Supper, call not thy Friends, nor thy Brethren, neither thy Kinsmen, nor thy rich Neighbours, lest they also bid thee again, and recompence be made thee; but when thou makest a Feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompence thee; but thou shalt be recompenced at the

Luke 14. 12, 13, 14.

resurrection of the just. You do not value men by their eminency in grace, but in parts and worldly endowments : as if gold did set men off more than *grace*. Those who have most of *Cesar's Image*, are held in higher reputation, than those who have most of *God's Image*. What a reflexion is this upon the great and blessed God ? *Paul* durst know no ^{2 Cor.} *man after the flesh* ; yet dare you esteem men ^{5. 16.} by their fleshly greatness in the world. When you should fix your affections, where you see most grace, you are taken where you see, either most of the world, or most gifts, prudence, learning, or most morality. You know, that you *bestow not most honour on the* ^{1 Cor.} *uncomely parts*, on them who have least of ^{12.} worldly Privileges, though the Apostle, yea God expects it. How rough and rigorous are you to poor men, if over-taken in a fault ? how is his offence aggravated ? how severely is he censured ? But if a rich mans transgression be the same, or more to be aggravated from the light it hath affronted, and from the danger of its scandal ; yet how is it past by, extenuated, if not excused and pardoned ? O ! This *having mens persons in admiration*, over-reverencing men for worldly things, is a great disparagement to the grace of God, as if *riches and honours* were more excellent than *Religion and Grace* : They who are *highly descended*, or who *relate to the Courts of Princes*, or who have their stores in *their houses*, are in greater esteem than others, who are *descended from above*, who
are

are related to the God of Heaven, who are Favourites in the New Jerusalem, and who have store of grace in their hearts. O my Bre-

Jam. 2. *ibren!* If there come into your Assembly a man
 2, 3, 4, with a gold ring, and there cometh also a poor
 5. man in vile rayment, and you have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, &c. are not you partial in your selves? Have not you made a difference, a groundless difference, a difference grounded on carnal respects, and not upon solid reason? Are not ye become judges of evil thoughts? Have not you made your judgement of such persons, according to the dictate of your own evil thoughts, and not according to the rule of the Word? O! how seldome do Professours value and respect as God doth? Let rich Professours be sick, or under any other stroke of Gods hand, what a doe is there? what running to him? what sending after him? what endeavours to comfort him? But O! how are the poor of the Church despised? Little sending to them, though they want necessities for their Bodies, in the time of their Visitation, and their Souls are ready to sink, for want of a word in season. Your frequent visiting of some, when under Gods hand, and seldome resorting to others, when in the same extremity, evidenceth, that you despise the poor: Yea, are not you ashamed to be in the company of a mean Christian? or to call a poor Christian, Brother? to own any such near relation to him? And yet the Lord is not
Jam. 2. 6. ashamed to call such, Brethren: Goe to my
Hebr. 2. 11. Bre-
John 20. 17. Bre-

Brethren, &c. But woe and alas ! the same mind is not in us, which was in Christ Jesus : *Learn of me ; for I am lowly.* But we are proud and haughty , and we learn of the high and mighty of the Earth to despise others of a lower condition , than our selves. The proud rich man can be content to claim kindred of *Abraham* , he calls him , *Father Abraham* ; but you read not that ever he said , *Brother Lazarus.* *It will not serve us , nor save us* (saith a late Bishop of England) *to be able to say , Abraham is our Father , except we will charitably acknowledge the poorest Christian , even Lazarus for our Brother.* Besides how soon is a rich Formalist admitted to Fellowship ? How hardly the Godly , if poor ?

7. *How do they who count themselves Christians of the highest form* , who have had great acquaintance with Christ and his wayes , who have had a long experience of Christs sweetness , and Satans deceits , *keep by themselves , with the neglect of the lambs* , of them who are but of yesterday , and know little of the mind of God ? How do we slight them (Christ did not so) who have but a mite or two for to cast into the treasury , I mean , who can contribute but little to their gifts or graces. They that are poor in spirit , as well as poor in the world , have but very little respect now adayes : whereas we should treasure and respect the smallest dust of Gold and Pearl : we should resemble the Lord Jesus Christ : his greatest care seems to be of the Lambs. *Feed my Lambs.* The Children in the Cradle , and when

Matth.

II. 29.

Luk. 16.

Slighting weak, as well as poor Christians.

when they begin to take their feet should then be most dandled, should then mostly be held up, they then should be never out of hand. If ye are Fathers, ye are unnatural ones, if you throw off the care of all the Children, that need your care, and take care of them who need it not. As *grace*, so growth in grace, is given to edifie the body of *Christ*, the eye is not for its self, but for the blind members, to lead them in paths of Righteousness. Your care should be like Gods: his care is for the least fly, as well as for the greatest of the creatures. Christ did not will the Salvation of one believer more than another, he dyed equally for all, all believers stand alike justified through the blood of Christ, Christ knocks at the poor mans door, as well as the rich, if Christ makes any difference, it is in this, the poor weak Christian hath more expressions of his love and affection, than the strong have, he shews most pitty to the greatest objects of pitty, to those that are in greatest want: yea the young Saint at his first Conversion, when he lately dropt from the Womb of the Gospel, when he is but a Babe in Christ, a sucking-Infant, he hath more kisses and embraces, more joy and comfort, than (perhaps) he meets with till he be a grown man, and old man in Christ, till he be not only a gracious, but a glorified Saint. The very Philosopher observes, that by Nature Parents are still carried with their greatest affections to the Child that is youngest; because that is com-
monly

monly most indigent, that is most hug'd in the bosome, dandled on the knee, kiss'd and smiled upon. I wish there were more of this *Nature* even among *supra-natural* Christians. It is lamentable to see how little honour is bestowed upon the *weaker Vessels*, and how few there are to be found, that *carry the lambs in their bosomes* (next their hearts) and *gently lead those that are with young*.

8. *How little compassion is shew'd to fall'n Brethren?* to such as are overtaken with a fault, yea with many? When their hearts, like the sluggards fields, are overgrown with weeds, we do not lend them our Spade, and Mattock, and Knife: we do not labour to pull the brands, that are half burnt, out of the fire: to save our selves this labour, we deem them Cast-awayes, as if there were no hope of their Restitution and Salvation, we never more look after them, to be sure, we do not as the blessed Apostle *John* did, who (as *Eusebius* relates in his Ecclesiastical History) ran after the back-slidden Pro-fessour, who was turned an *High-way-man*, to take him by holy guile, and to recover him out of the snares of Hell. We carry it, as if we held, that sins committed after Conversion were unpardonable. Art thou a stranger to thy own heart? If not, thou knowest God pittiyeth thee, though thou fallest seven times a day, and it ill becomes thee, who hast been so oft holpen out of the deep ditch, to deny help to thy Brother, that

Not come
passiona-
ting fall'n
Brethren.

that lyes there, and perhaps will perish, if none be more merciful than thy self. Are there no solemn engagements upon thy Soul towards thy Neighbour? Will not God take thee by the throat for thy unmercifulness? *O thou wicked Servant, I forgave thee all thy debt, because thou desiredst me: shouldst not thou have had compassion upon thy fellow-Servant, even as I had pity on thee? Verily, the Lord is wroth with you, and if this be not amended, he will deliver you to the Tormentours, till you shall pay all that is due unto him. O! Repent of your defectiveness in this thing. Multitudes are hastening to the Valley of Decision, multitudes are departed from their former Profession, some of them are become scandalous: their sins will lye at your doors, and their blood too, if you, through unfaithfulness, or through negligence, or through fainting, endeavour not to restore them, to set the bones again, that are unhappily dislocated. Ye which are Spiritual, restore, &c. Are ye all Carnal? are none of you Spiritual? If there be one, here is work for him, as he will answer the contrary at his peril.*

Mat.
18. 32.
33, 34.

Gal. 6. 1.

Ground-
less sepa-
ration.

Hebr.

10. 25.

9. *On how uneasy and sinful (because unwarrantable) accounts, do many withdraw from the Communion of their Brethren? What, have not they read, or heard, Forsake not the assembling of your selves together, as the manner of some is? It was then dangerous not to separate; but it was more dangerous to separate: Not to separate was dangerous to the out-ward*

ward

ward man ; but to seperate was dangerous to the inward man. When ever you hear of *Demas*, that he hath left us, the next news you will hear of him ; is, *he hath embraced this present World.* If the *Devil* can, like a subtle Cutter on the road, draw thee off from thy company, he will soon cut the throat of thy Profession. It's no wonder to hear an house is robbed, that stands alone from Neighbours. *Two are better than one.* The Church of God is compared to a City, the weak walls of the houses therein, would never endure a blustering wind; but by their Neighbour-hood and Contiguity, they succour each other: But when one stands divided, the next news you may expect to hear of, is a fall, and if it be a trowning house, the fall is great. And yet alas ! upon every prejudice and discontent, if one Brother falls out with another, presently the whole Congregation is threatened with the loss of the prejudiced and discontented party's company, and condemned for the miscarriages of one, and perhaps the supposed Offendour hath not the liberty to know his *Offence*. In order to his Repentance, nor the Church regularly acquainted therewith.

10. The last great Evil among Church-Members, that I shall mention, is, *Their not withdrawing from every Brother that walks disorderly, when under Censure.* How solemnly is this required by the Apostle ? Now we command you, Brethren, in the Name of *2 Thes.* our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw your selves

Not sepe-
rating
from Per-
sons under
Censure.

3. 6.

Their miscarriages towards Sinners.

selves from every Brother, that walks disorderly. Who can tell what blessed effects of Gods own Censures their eyes might have seen, had not Professours been herein guilty? By a general dislike the person censured might soon be convinced and humbled. Undoubtedly it was your duty to have added weight unto the Discipline of Christ, what you could, and to discountenance those, whom the Lord had discarded. Instances are not wanting of such as God hath brought to repentance by the strangeness of such as were once their Fellow-members. Possibly you may be condemned for such a carriage, but if ever God bring such Censured persons to Repentance, though it be upon their death bed, though it be in a forraign Country, God will not suffer them to dye quietly, till they have acquitted, yea justified your carriage towards them.

CHAP. XXXVI.

Their miscarriages towards Sinners.

Church-
members
affocia-
ting with
the Pro-
fane.

May not too much familiarity with profane wretches be justly charged upon Church-members? I know man is a sociable creature; but that will not excuse Saints as

to their carelesness of the choice of their company. The very Fowls of the Air, and Beasts of the Field, love not Heterogeneous company: *Birds of a Feather flock together.* I have been afraid, that many, who would be thought eminent, of an high stature in grace and godliness, yet see not the vast difference there is between Nature and Regeneration, Sin and Grace, the Old and the New Man, seeing all company is alike unto them. And is it not thus with thee? Is it not all one, whether thou art with a Child of God, or with a Child of the Devil? Are not those fit Companions for thee, who slight and rebel against God every day?

Whence?
From not
believing
the en-
mity that
is in the
seed of
the Ser-

O! How few consult and believe the Scripture's setting forth the enmity of wicked men against Gods people? The Scripture tells us, *They eat up Gods people, as bread,* which implies a strange inclination in them to devour the Saints, and that they take as great delight therein, as an hungry man in eating, and that it is natural to them to molest them: The Scripture compares them, for their hurtful qualities, to *Lions* and *Bears*, to *Foxes* for subtilty, to wild *Bulls*, to greedy *Swine*, to *Scorpions*, to *Bryars* and *Thornes*, (grievous and vexing things.) The Scripture represents them as industrious and unwearied in their bloody Enterprizes; they cannot sleep without doing mischief: *Herodias* had rather have the blood of a Saint, than half of a Kingdom: *Haman* would pay a great Fine to the King, so the scattered *Jews* (who

pent a-
gainst the
seed of
the Wo-
man.
Psal.
14. 4.
Prov.
28. 15.
Isa. 51.
20.
Psal.
22. 12.
Mat. 7.
6.
Ezek.
2. 6.
Prov.
4. 16.

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keep not the Kings laws) may be cut off. Wicked men will run the hazard of damning their own Souls, rather than not fling a dagger at the Apple of Gods eye: though they know, what one word (Aha) cost; yet they will break through all natural, civil, and moral obligations to ruine Gods people: The Holy-Ghost calls them *implacable men, fierce and headstrong*: they are like the *hot Oven* for fury, like the *Sea* for *boundless rage*: yet *who hath believed this Scripture Report?*

2 Tim.
3. 3.

Evidences thereof.

Did we believe what Enemies all wicked men are unto all Saints, "We should not lean to our own prudence and discretion to secure us from any danger by these men: we would get an Ark to secure us from the deluge of their wrath: If at any time we be cast among them and delivered, we would bless God with the three Children, that the hot fiery Oven did not consume us: we would not wonder, when we hear of any of their barbarous cruelty; but rather wonder at Gods restraining them every day: we would be suspicious of receiving hurt, when cast among light and frothy Companions: we would shun their company, as we do Lyons and Scorpions: we would never commit any trust or secret in to their hands: we would not be light hearted, whilst in their Society: we would not rely on their promises any more than we would on the promise of the Devil, their Father: we would long for Heaven to be delivered from the tents of Kedar: we

"we would not count any of the Saints secure
 "red from danger, though related to any
 "great wicked man: we would not twist our
 "selves with them by matching our selves or
 "Children to these Sons and Daughters of
 "Belial: neither would we make choice of
 "Devils to be our Servants

How few do believe what a quarrel God hath From not
with wicked men. And that not only with the believing
 loose; but the formal and hypocritical also? Gods
 If we did, we would tremble as much to be quarrel
 among them, as to be in an house, that is them, with
 falling: we would endeavour to save our *Act.*
 selves from this ungodly generation. The 40.

Apostle would not so have adjured them, so
 charg'd, so intreated them, had he not known
 the danger of wicked company. *God is angry with the wicked every day; his bow is bent,* Psa. 71.
his arrows are on the strings, the instruments

for their ruine are all prepared. And is it
 safe to be there where the Arrows of God
 are ready to fly about our ears? How was the
 Apostle afraid to be in the Bath with Cerin-

thus? *Depart* (saith God by Moses) *from* Numb.
the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, lest 16. 26

you be consumed in all their sins. How have
 the baskets of good figs suffered with the bad!
 Is it not prejudicial to the gold so lye with
 the dross? Lot had been ruined by his Neigh-
 bourhood to the *Sodomites*; if God had not
 wrought wonderfully for his deliverance.
 Will you put God to work miracles to save
 you from your ungodly company? It is dan-
 gerous being in the road with thieves, whilst

Prov. Gods *bne* and cry of Vengeance is at their backs. *A Companion of fools shall be destroyed.*

13. 20. The very beasts may instruct you to consult better for your security, the very *Deer* are afraid of a wounded chased *Deer*, and therefore for their preservation thrust him out of their company.

From not believing that they have suffered from them.

How few believe their own experiences, what they have suffered by the company of the Ungodly? It had been better we had gone to the *Pest-house*, and eat and drank with persons infected with the *Plague*, even whilst the soar and botch was running on them, than to accompany with wicked men: our *bodies* would have been endangered only by the one; but our *Souls* are by the other. Is not the *poysen* of *Asps* under their tongues? Doth not the *Devil* act them? Doth he not *work effectually* in the *Children of disobedience*? Doth he not inform them? Is there any breath, that is not infectious, coming from their lips? How soon could *Joseph* rap out an Oath by living with *Pharaohs* Courtiers? It was not long time, that *Peter* was (unnecessarily, without a Call) in the High-Priests Hall, and how quickly do we hear him Curse and Swear, and deny his Lord and Master? We are insensibly insnared, and defiled, by wicked men, as we are black'd and discoloured by lying long under the hot and scorching Sun-beams. Do not we yet know and feel how a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump, and that one sinner destroys much good, and that those that were mingled among the *Heathen*,

Heathen, learned their wayes? Have not you found after such company-keeping, how your hearts have been dead, dull, straitned, both, and unwilling to come into Gods presence? It is difficult (saith a late ingenious Writer) even to a miracle to keep Gods Commandements, and evil company too. How suddenly after your Soul-refreshments in your Closet Communion have you lost all your heats, and spiritual fervencies, which you had in secret, and have instantly cooled by going forth into cold and corrupt air? When a Saint hath been in private ravished with the love of God, and the joys of Heaven, and afterwards meets with company, which neither doth, nor can speak one word of such matters, what a damp is it to him? What a quenching (as it were) of the Spirit of God in him? Nay is not that true which one saith, that the people of God do generally lose more by worldly men (that are of a blameless conversation before men) than they lose by wicked and profane men? O! how oft hath communion with carnal men been at least an occasion of blotting your evidences? and of your suspecting the truth of your own graces, whilst you have omitted the duties of admonition and reproof, when there was a call thereto? O! how oft have you said, If I cannot suffer such a mans frowns and displeasure, and therefore have omitted my duty to their Souls, and durst not appear for God against their sins, how shall I deny my self in greater matters? How shall I suffer at a stake for Christ? How shall I resist

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to blood, fighting against sin? You hold the Wolfe by the Ear, whilst among them: If you reprove them, you get a blot; if not, you fear, you are too cowardly, to be enrolled among the Saints. I will acquaint you with an Observation of mine: When I have seen a Christian fall into an intimacy with vain and erroneous company, I have caused it a mark of a back-sliding heart, and have found it so too oft: And no wonder; for we ourselves count it a disgrace to us to accompany with them, who associate with people suspected for uncleanness and dishonesty, and so doth the Spirit of God, who will not partake in the scandal of such Association: Verily, He will not be a Partner with you, when you are not choice of your Fellowship.

From not considering, how hereby they harden them in their wickedness, *How few consider, how they harden wicked men, by an intimacy with them, Whereas withdrawal from them, might be a means to make them ashamed? Whilst we are merry and jovial with them, we make them believe their condition is not deplorable, their danger is not great; whereas, if we frowned them, as we would a Bowed Wall, whilst they remain enemies to the Lord, this might do them good, for the startling of them, and rousing of them, out of their unhappy security, and strong delusions, wherein they are held.*

Not discharging Duty in their company, *Secondly, May not neglect of discharging the Duties owed to wicked men, whilst in their company, be also justly charged upon Church-Members?*

Members? Professours carelessness or the perishing condition of the Souls even of the vilest, is a sin much to be lamented. It is an *Iron Age* we live in, and mens hearts are strangely hardned, as to any pitty they shew to the multitudes, who are in a natural and damnable condition. Me-thinks you should reflect on the misery of an unconverted state, whilst you your selves were so lately in it.

Are not you convinced, that those with whom you converse daily, have reasonable, immortal Souls, capable of eternal life or misery? Have not they the same common Nature with you? Are there not (at least) many civil bonds, wherein you stand related to them? Doth not their *misery* call aloud for your *compassions*? Are they not *in the gall of bitterness, and bonds of iniquity*? Have they yet any part or fellowship in the pardon of their Sins? The endeavouring to heal the back-slidings of Christians, though a very necessary work, is not so necessary (for they will surely be pardoned and healed, they are not in such hazard of damnation) as to endeavour *to open the eyes* of these poor blind wretches, and *to turn them from the power of Satan unto God*. Would you not make more haste to cure a man, that is taken with a swooning fit, than one that hath a little swelling in his finger? I wonder you are no more affected with the miseries that attend your Unregenerate Friends and Acquaintance, who must suddenly be Converted, or Damned: Me-thinks you should pitty them

Several weighty Considerations, to persuade Professors to be treating with Souls about their eternal Estate, what-ever company they are in.

the more; because they pity not themselves. Me-thinks the value that Christ hath put upon Souls, by bleeding for them, the ransom that he hath given for miserable man, and the unwearied pains he takes for the redemption of fall'n man, should teach us to open our lips, to give some directions and counsels to them, who are within a stride of Hell, but a breath between them and eternal ruine: And yet how are Gods people straitned towards these forlorn and miserable, undone, condemned Creatures? Though they are under the curse of the Law, though the sentence of death be past against them, and is ready to be executed every moment; yet you exhort them not to *flye from wrath to come*: If they will perish, they may perish, for any spiritual contribution that you will afford them. It grieves me sometimes, to see how Gods people eat up their own and others time, with vain, frothy and unsavoury words: When they should be speaking some rouzing, startling words of Hell and Damnation, of the necessity of Regeneration, of Eternity, of the foolish choice men make in preferring *the pleasures of sin, which are but for a season*, before eternal joyes; of the deceits of the heart, of the cheats of the Devil, of the malignity of sin, of the curse of the Law, &c. they are talking of this fashion, or of that, they are perhaps censuring one another, but endeavouring nothing for the undeceiving their deluded Companions. You cannot but know what advantages you

you have by your intimacies with them , to deliver that to them, which they will receive from you , when Satan perhaps hath imbittered them against their Ministers, so that all Pulpit-counsels and reproofs are lost upon them. Besides , You are in private with them , and you know by your selves , how loth , how backward you were, to apply the truths of God to your own Souls , but you , as *Nathan to David* , may goe and say, *Thou art the Man, thou the Woman* : You may hear their pleas for themselves , and so have an opportunity to confute them ; whereas they are reserved to their Ministers , though they have been friendly , earnestly and frequently invited to a Christian conference : And yet how do you neglect all these Opportunities of serving the Necessities of your Friends : You pretend love unto them ; but how can ye see the blind before your eyes tumbling into the Lake of Hell , and yet not call on them to return and live ? It is admirable , that you should think you have the Divine Nature within you , and yet be void of compassions to these miserable Objects , who lye wounded before you , where-ever you goe or come. O ! Me-thinks , when you enter the house of an Unregenerate , you should thus meditate , *Now have I an opportunity to save a Soul from Hell , to have a greater conquest than Cæsar or Alexander could boast of : Now may I shew my self a Friend of God , by pleading his right to the Creature : Now may I have an occasion to make all the Angels of Heaven*

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Heaven laugh and sing, and all the cursed Devils to roar, by saving a lost Soul.

And will you see these wounded in your way, and pass them by with an unmerciful Spirit? *If you see your Brother have need of outward things, (much more if needing Grace, the Image of, and Peace with, God) and you shut up your bowells of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in you?* You have some pity left, when you see a man fall'n under his horse, or struggling for life upon the waters, or in an house fired, your bowells are turned within you; But alas! here are they that are dropping into the Lake of Fire every moment, that are dragged up and down, from one Lust to another, by the Devil, (a sorer bondage by farr) and yet you do not pity them. O! Pity them, pity them; *Goe over to Macedonia, and help them.* It is a grief to my Soul, to consider, how dull, how useless Christians are, in the Towns and Villages, where Providence hath cast them: If they meet with a man, they will not so much as ask, whether he be bound for Heaven, or Hell? whether he knows the necessity of the new Birth, yea or no? whether he hath left Sin, as his greatest burden, whether he be willing of Christ, and Salvation by him, upon his own terms? Nay, Professours will not so much as counsel them to read a good Book, or lend them one, if they are poor and unable to buy: they will be at no cost to save a Soul, that is really of more worth, than a World. How

is it, that you account your selves Christians, whilst you have no higher esteems of Souls? Or how can you have any assurance, that you hate Sin, whilst you labour not the removal of it, in whomsoever you find it? If you see men trilling away their time, why do you not put them upon redeeming their time? If you find them lovers of pleasures, why do you not invite them, and press them, to look after cordial joy and mirth, and the true pleasures, that are at Gods right hand? If you are the Subjects of Christ, how can you endure Treason against him, and not suppress it? I'll never believe, that man ever mourned for sins of his own, that doth not for sins of others; or that he ever hated sin in himself, that doth not endeavour to raine it in others Souls, as well as in his own. Be ashamed at your pretensions, as if you had hearts of flesh, when you have hearts of stones, the hearts of Tygers, the hearts of Infidels, or else you would pity the miserable unconverted Souls. And what, if they desire not your help; the more need you have to pity them: the less awakened they are out of their cursed security, the more miserable and dangerous is their state. O! Put on the bowells of Jesus Christ: carry not your selves in an high, proud way, in a lofty, magisterial way, towards these poor Souls; Do not think thou hast discharged duty towards them, by running into a corner, and backbiting them for blindness, hardness, contempt of Christ, &c. but rather

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ther help them to some of your eye-salve, that they may see. Consider you have Talents, and account you must for them, and be-think your selves, whether you may not give a better account, by endeavouring to reduce these poor Souls, that are straying to Hell, than by letting them alone to damn themselves: Consider sadly what answer you will make, when Christ shall arise and plead with you, when Christ shall say, *Where is thy Brother?* Will Cain's answer serve? *Am I my Brothers keeper?* Will not Christ reply on you? "Did not I come from Heaven
 "on purpose to redeem these perish Souls?
 "Did not I charge you to *exhort one another*
 "daily? to *do good to all?* Did not I furnish
 "you with wisdom and experience, that
 "you might be able and ready to help o-
 "thers? Did not I by wonders of Provi-
 "dence prolong your dayes, that you might
 "be useful? Did not I give you an interest in
 "the affections of your Neighbours, that
 "you might be *as the Dew*, and *as the Rivers*
 "of *Waters to the parched ground?* that you
 "might be the *Light and Salt of the Earth?*
 "Nay, did not I remove the Ministry, (a-
 "mong other weighty grounds) to try your
 "affections to perishing Souls? And is this
 "your answering all my designs and expecta-
 "tions, to rail at them, as the ungodly par-
 "ty, and not to endeavour to make them
 "better? O! Consider how sad your case
 will be, if the blood of thousands of Souls
 shall be lain at your doors, for your neg-
 lects,

lests, for your carelessness, for your being worse than *Balaams* Ass; for he once reprov'd, perhaps you have never. How do you know, but a few words of yours might be as forcible as *Jonah's* to *Nineveh*, as the *Samaritan* woman's was to the City? Is this to love thy Neighbour as thy self? Do'st love thy self, and not regard thy Soul? And canst thou love thy Neighbour, and not endeavour to save him from perishing? to pull the brand out of the fire? Have you so learned Christ? When our Lord dwelt in flesh among us, was he dumb before sinners, as you are, when he saw the multitude wanting bread, did not he deal forth the bread of life to them? did not he prefer this work before his meat and drink? had not he compassion for the ignorant? did not he enlighten poor ignorant Souls? and reprove the Hypocrisie of others? When he went into the Publicans houses, did not he preach of the Kingdome of God unto them? And hath not he given you an example, that you should do as he hath done? Should not you make it a matter of Conscience to write after so great, so safe, so glorious a Copy? to follow so worthy a Leader and Pattern? Add withall, what stumbling blocks you have laid in the wayes of sinners? how many have been offended by your conversation? And will you send so many hundreds to Hell, and not endeavour the conversion of some? You pretend the want of parts: But alas! you want bowels, you want affections, you have not

a real sight, and deep sense of eternal matters: If you had, you would with tears in your eyes beseech your Neighbours to mind their perishing Souls. Have not you so many parts as to say to your Neighbours, *Repent, and Pray, if perhaps your sins may be forgiven.* Go into thy Closet, Professour, and there mourn over thy hard heartedness, and unmercifulness to the Souls of thousands, of whom thou might'st have been an instrument of Conversion, if thou hadst but attempted it. Or could you not have gone and beseeched your Ministers to lay to heart the perishing estate of such a man or woman? Or might you not have entreated those Souls to consult some Minister about their Everlasting State? You have not done what you could: you pretend you cannot convert them; but you will not, you will not try whether you can work them over from sin to God. You say they are dead in sins and trespasses, they have hearts of stone, as insensible as stones, as stupid, as blockish, as impenetrable as stones: And wast not thou so some years ago? Hast thou forgot *the rock, out of which thou wast hewn*? Nay, is there not too much stone in thy heart, that thou canst see thy God so dishonoured, Christ so reproached by those, who are baptized in his Name, and wear his Livery, and yet not endeavour to pull them out of the fire? Thou relievest thy self with the mercy thou shewest to the bodies of the poor, that beg at thy door: when thou seest their soars, their lean cheeks,

and

and naked shoulders, thou succourest them, these things thou oughtest to do; but not to lay aside the Spiritual Almes, that were due unto them: thou shouldst have counselled them, admonished them, enlightned them; and now if they perish in their ignorance, will not their blood be required at thy hands? O! tremble at your blood-guiltiness. The Lord of Heaven and Earth, who layes his claim to Souls, *All Son's are mine*, hath charged thee, *not to hate thy Brother in thine heart, not to suffer sin to rest upon him, but to reprove him*: And yet thou lettest him alone, to perish in his iniquity. You are so taken up with your own temporal or eternal good, that you little regard what becomes of others to all eternity. How do some hope to sink to Heaven alone? Perhaps they *seek their own profit*; *1 Cor.* but *not the profit of many, that they may be saved*. *10. 33.* O that men would cast their eyes abroad (saith one) the very dumb inanimate Creatures would teach them better; every Creature assimilates, Fire turns what is near it into Fire, Earth converts into Earth, Flowers will be scattering of their seed and scent. How canst thou hope the blessing of the new Creation rests upon thee, when thou dost not increase and multiply? O that you would be prevailed with, to help, counsel and direct others to Heaven! If you have found the way thither, be pleased to shew others the way to life, the way to glory. O! Pity them, as Christ pittied you; Christ hath led you out of the wilderness of sin and trouble,

trouble, Be you eyes to the blind, direct them the right way to the Land of Promise, tell them what course you took, declare unto them what God hath done for your Souls. Do not you see how industrious Christs enemies are to diffuse their poyson? Do not Turks and Papists endeavour to proselyte? Will they not compass Sea and Land to spread and diffuse their Leaven? Do not all people (besides you) labour to win to their Gods? Do not unclean persons and drunkards entice others to the same wickedness? Shall Satans Vassals be filling Hell? and will you not labour to fill Heaven? Is it not your Honour to bring many Sons and Daughters unto God? What will become of the next Generation? How few Servants (if any) will Christ have, if others take no more pains, than you do, to convince, to allure, to convert? I fear Christ will take up the old complaint, *The Foxes have holes,*
Mat. 8. and the Birds have Nests, but the Son of Man
20. will not have where to lay his head. Consider how oft your poor Ministers have beseeched you to enter on this work, lest other-mens-sins prove your damnation; and yet how hath a dumb Devil possessed you? O that yet you would commune with your own hearts, whether you are willing that thousands should perish, and go to Hell? and if they answer, No, Ask them a second question, why do not you use the means to prevent it, Namely Exhortation, Reproof, and Counsell? You have covered over your want of
 Zeal

Zeal and tenderness with a pretence that you have not the gifts of Ministers, you cannot so exhort as Ministers, &c. But have you not been told that God can work by small means, as well as by great, and that by things that are not God can confound the wisdom of the flesh, and bring to naught the things that are? Is not this like the presence of not being eloquent? Do you not know, have you not heard, that the issue, and event depends on the blessing of the Lord, rather than on the work it self? Is it not all one to the Lord, to wound by a short, as by a long sword? Cannot God bless a few words in thy mouth, as he did in Christs, and the Apostles? Can't not thou say, *follow Christ*? and may not presently a *Matthew*, a Publican leave his sinfull courses and embrace the Christian faith? Can't thou not say, *Repent and Believe*, that *your sins may be blotted out*? and may not God concur with thee, as he did of old times? *Is the Lords hand shortened, that it cannot help? If Israel be not gathered, yet thy reward is with the Lord*, if thine heart were upright; and could testifie that night and day thou halt not ceased to warn, to rebuke, and counsel. Certainly your memories are not so bad, but you must remember the weight of sin, and of the wrath of God: you have seen the wonders of the Lord in the deeps: you, that have escaped to shoar, can tell of the Rocks and Shelves, and Storms, which you have been delivered from; and will you let other Shipwreck their Souls, rather than hold out your

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light unto them , that they may avoyd their ruines? What shall I say to humble you? There is more charity in Hell , than you can afford : Blush, blush, and be ashamed to have less zeal, love, and pittie, to perishing Souls, than *Dives* in Hell had , he would have his Brethren saved from the Valley of *Hinnom*. Your silence will make others think that Hell is a tollerable place , that sin is not so evil and bitter a thing , that to lye under Gods wrath is not so great a misery , whilst you are so slow and backward to warn your Friends and Acquaintance that they flee from these, and take Sanctuary in the true City of Refuge , the Lord Jesus Christ. O! If you know the worth of a Soul , pittie the multitude, with whom the day is not broke, whose forlorn Souls are under a continual Massacre from the bloody Butcher of Hell : Besmear your Souls no longer with the guilt of their blood : Let them not starve for want of bread, whilst you have to give them. I shall bless God for ever and ever , if this your negligence of the Souls of those, whom you may account without, may be cordially bewailed , and you for the future double your diligence for their conversion. Ministers cannot convert without the Concourse of Omnipotency , neither can you. Though Satan and thy own lazy heart hath told thee , thou art unfit to set upon this work , yet better do it meanly, than wholly omit it. God (like Parents on earth) loves to see his Children lift at those duties, which are too hard for them,
and

and then he steps in and is a Co-worker with them. What God did by illiterate Fishermen, by *Priscilla*, he can do by thee. The Lord pardon thy former unmercifulness to the Souls of men; But if thou continue careless and cruel, if thou wilt not by Prayers for them, and counsels to them, seek their reducement, as sure as thou art reading, the voyce of thy Brothers blood is crying against thee from the earth. By your example before (if not since) Profession, you have been the cause of the destruction of Souls, of how many who can tell? And, as *Jeroboam made Israel to sin* many years after he was rotten in his grave, so your sin, your wicked examples may propagate the trade of sin from generation to generation, until Christ shall come to Judgement. Tremble, tremble at the thoughts of it, if thou hast not the heart of a Beast in thee. O! how many Souls are crying in Hell against thee, cursing the day they knew thee, or their Ancestours knew thee; for that by thee they learned to sin the more, and were strengthened in their wickedness by thy tongue, and by thy life? And now are not you bound to do your utmost to make restitution? to labour to save them that be alive? Is it not reasonable that you should labour to win Souls to Gods, as you have to the Devils, service? and to have many blessing God in the Heavens for you, that ever they were in the company of such an active zealous Christian, who by word and life was instrumental to bring them

to the knowledge of themselves, and of their God? And is it not a glorious work, to hold forth such Light to the World, that they seeing your good works, may glorifie God, and you may be Propagators of Zeal and Holiness, from Generation to Generation; till Christ shall appear to judge the World; and to reward you for all the services you have done to his Name? O! how welcome shall that man be to Heaven and Christ, who hath sed the Souls, and clothed the Souls, and visited the Souls, which he hath purchased with his own precious blood? Christ will own thee for his Benefactor.

CHAP. XXXVII.

The Dis-ingenuity and Scandalousness of their Miscarriages.

The wicked-
ness of
the former mis-
carriages.
Ezek.
8. 9.
V. 6,
13, 15.

WHen God had given the Prophet Ezekiel a large Catalogue of Judah's Abominations, he then shew'd him the *Wickedness* of their Abominations: *He said unto me, Goe in, and Behold the wicked Abominations they do here.* He commanded him once, and again, and again, to turn him yet again, and he should see greater Abominations. I cannot

not indeed promise thee, that thou shalt now see greater Abominations, than those already mentioned : All that I shall now do, shall be to represent the former Miscarriages in their crimson dye, and scarlet colour. And,

The First Thing I shall mention, as mankind's your Sins (Professours) out of measure ^{Com-}mitted ^{against so} sinful, is your Dis-ingenuity in so sinning a ^{good and} gainst God. O ! You have sinned against a ^{kind a} gracious God : You have grieved the good Spirit of God, whereby (some amongst you) ^{Eph. 4.} have been sealed to the day of Redemption. I 30. am bold to say, that one godly man's sinning against light and mercy, doth more break the heart of God, than the brutish Sins of a Pagan Kingdom. I am broken (saith God) ^{Ezek.} with your whorish heart, which hath departed 6. 9. from me, &c. And ye shall loath your selves for your evils, which ye have committed in your abominations. God hath been press'd ^{Amos} down with your sins, as the Cart with sheaves, 2. 13. till he hath even Creak'd under the weight. God expected more from the Trees planted in Zion, than from the wild ones in the Wilderness. Grief and Burthen springs much from unexpected Unkindnesses. I looked for Fruit, ^{Luke} and there was none. How were David's and ^{13. 9.} Saul's Sins aggravated from the merciful Dispensations of God to them ? And Samuel ^{1 Sam.} said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, 15. 17, wast not thou made the Head of the Tribes of Israel, 18, 19. and the Lord annointed thee King over Israel, and the Lord sent thee on a journey, and

- said, Goe, and utterly destroy the Sinners, &c. Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord? And Nathan said to David, &c.
- 2 Sam. Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I annointed thee King over Israel, and delivered thee out of the hand of Saul: And I gave thee thy Masters House, and thy Masters Wives into thy bosome, and gave thee the House of Israel, and of Judah, and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things. Wherefore hast thou despised the Commandement of the Lord, to do evil in his sight? And hath there not been as much disingenuity and unkindness in our Sins? The Lord hath given his Statutes to us, and his Laws, He hath not so dealt with all the Nations under Heaven: He hath nourished and brought us up as Children; but we have rebelled against him. The Ox knoweth his Owner, and the Ass his Masters Crib: but Israel doth not know, my People (my People) doth not consider. Ah sinful Nation, a People laden with iniquity, &c. God fetcheth a deep sigh (Ah!) under the burden of this Ingratitude: His Spirit is laden and troubled with it. They have provoked the Holy One of Israel. Mis-improvements of Mercies are very provoking. When God comes for Bread, to be sent away with Stones, must need vex the good Spirit of the Lord. Hear, O Heavens, and give ear, O Earth; for the Lord hath spoken it. Oh for Professours to be worse than Publicans; for they will be kind to such as are kind to them! Have not we
- Isa. I. led against him. The Ox knoweth his Owner, and the Ass his Masters Crib: but Israel doth not know, my People (my People) doth not consider. Ah sinful Nation, a People laden with iniquity, &c. God fetcheth a deep sigh (Ah!) under the burden of this Ingratitude: His Spirit is laden and troubled with it. They have provoked the Holy One of Israel. Mis-improvements of Mercies are very provoking. When God comes for Bread, to be sent away with Stones, must need vex the good Spirit of the Lord. Hear, O Heavens, and give ear, O Earth; for the Lord hath spoken it. Oh for Professours to be worse than Publicans; for they will be kind to such as are kind to them! Have not we
- 2, 3, 4.

we sinn'd against God, even with his favours, and requited him evil for good? May not the Lord say unto us? *Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise?* *Deut. 32. 6.* *Is not he thy Father, that hath bought thee?* All the mercies we have received, greaten our sins. The more richly that God hath heaped his Blessings upon us, the more wantonly we have followed the swinge of our own Lusts, and the more contemptuously spurned at his holy Commandements. We have great cause to be ashamed, for that all our sins have been *sins against mercy*, and therefore against the Principle and Law of Nature. It is a perpetual Spot, not to be worn out by time, that of King *Joash*, that he slew *Zechariah*, the Son of *Jehojada*, the High-Priest, who had been loyal unto him in the getting of the Kingdom, and faithful in the administration of it. Thus *Joash* *2 Chron. 24. 22,* *the King remembered not the kindness which Jehojada his Father had done to him, but slew 23.* *his Son, and when he dyed, he said, the Lord look upon it, and requite it. And it came to pass, at the end of the year, that the Host of Syria came up against him: and they came to Judah and Jerusalem, and destroyed all the Princes of the people, from among the people. But alas! What Engagements could Zechariah possibly lay on Joash, that may weigh with the Mercies of our God to us? And yet, how have we made his choicest Favours as Arrows, to shoot at the God that sent them? What wretched Prodigals have we been, to*

Ezra 9.

13, 14.

Mica

6. 5.

waſt all in the ſervice of Hell, which were
 contrer'd with ſo open an hand, to draw
 forth our time, ſtrength and ſpirits, in the
 praiſes and ſervices of God? For this, our In-
 gratitude, *the Lord may juſtly be angry with*
us, till he hath conſumed us, ſo that there
ſhall be no remnant, nor eſcaping. O that
 you would remember the Lord from *Shittim*
 to *Gilgal*, i. e. from the *beginning* of Mer-
 cy, to the *end* of it! And you will hardly
 find, that you (any of you) have been the
 better for it; but many, *Jeſhurun-like*, have
waxed fat, and kicked. God is this day cal-
 ling out of Heaven to *England*, and to each
 particular perſon in it, *Do you thus requite*
the Lord, O fooliſh people, and unwiſe? I
 could even wiſh, for the thouſands of our
Iſrael, that they had received fewer Privi-
 leges, or had had the grace to ſerve the Lord
 in the abundance of all things, better than
 they have to this very day. If ever you pur-
 poſe ſound Repentance, then take a view of
 all the Mercies of God towards you: Goe
 back to the time, when the firſt ſtone was
 laid; yea goe back to the eternal projects of
 God, to make thee out of nothing, and to
 redeem thee, when worſe than nothing:
 Review *the upper and lower Springs*, with
 which *Soul* and *Body* have been refreshed:
 Remember how many eminent Deliverances
 and Salvations God hath wrought for thee:
 And if at any time thou haſt been ſtrained
 in outward comforts, yet remember how
 thou haſt been enlarged with ſpiritual graces;

if

if God hath denyed thee in one kind of mercy, he hath supplied it by a gracious wonderfull commutation, in another, in a better: if thou hast been denyed *the fleshpots of Egypt*, and *the land flowing with honey*, yet it hath been all made up in *the bread* (the Mannah) *that fell from Heaven*: if thou hast had sometimes bodily infirmities, yet thou hast been *strengthened with all might in the inward man*: if thou hast been denyed thee the *gold* of the earth, yet God hath supplied thee in making thee *rich in faith*: If sometimes Friends have been unfriendly, inconstant, or treacherous; yet *God hath stood by thee*, when all *left thee*. God hath dealt with you, as with Sons: your *gleanings* are better than the *Vintage* of the world. Having laid these, and innumerable such mercies in *one Scale*, now lay in the *other Scale* thy foul ingratitude, not only that particular sin of unthankfulness, that thou hast been guilty of (of which before) but the ingratitude that hath been in all thy sins, in thy pride, hypocrisie, formality, self love, self-seeking, impatience, neglect of duty to Superiours, Equals, and Inferiours, profaneness, intemperance, unrighteousness, &c. that *Remembring the Lord and his goodness towards thee*, together with thy cursed returns, *thou may'st yet abhor thy self in dust and ashes*. Take words, and say,
 "My Salvations are more than I can number,
 "Blessed be God, the Father of all mercy;
 "But my sins also are innumerable, I cannot
 "recount them, shame upon me, O! how
 "vile

“ vile have I made my self, whilst by abuse
 “ of rich mercy, I have lived below the in-
Mat. 5. “ genuity that is found in *Publicans* and
 47. “ *Beasts*? O that God would give me the suc-
Isa. 1. 3. cess, that the Angel had on such a sinfull
 people as you are! *And the Angel of the*
Judg. 2. *Lord come up from Gilgal to Bochim, and*
 1, 2, 3, 4. *said I made you to go up out of Egypt, and*
have brought you into the land, which I swear
unto your Fathers, and I said I will never break
my covenant with you, and ye shall make no
league with the Inhabitants of this land, &c.
but ye have not obeyed my voice, why have ye
done this, &c. And it came to pass, when the
Angel of the Lord spake these words to all the
Children of Israel, that the people lift up their
voice, and wept.

Very
 scanda-
 lously.

Secondly, *The scandalousness of your miscar-*
riages is another aggravation of them. Had
 all the forementioned abominations been
 committed in Desarts and Holes of the earth,
 where none had been privy to your irregular-
 ities, you had had no sin in comparison of
 what you (now) stand justly charged with :
 If you had been only rotten hearted, that
 would not have been under the eye and cen-
 sure of the World : Religion would have had
 no blemish, no loss, no considerable loss
 thereby : But *men* have looked to your *hands*
and feet (whilst *God* to your *hearts*) and find-
 ing so many defilements on you, hereby the
 Name of God hath been blasphemed, God
 is spoken evil of, whilst you have done evil
 before men. You knew the world was an ob-
 ob-

observing world, greedy to espy all the *Errata's* of your lives: you knew spots in Cambrick would sooner be marked, than in course cloth: you knew how apt the world was to condemn all Saints for the miscarriages of a few pretenders to Christianity: you knew how the world lay in wait, like the *Arabian* for his prey, waiting for somewhat to calumniate Christ and his followers with: you knew the tongues, that are set on fire of Hell, would belch out their emnity upon the sight of your sins: you knew how apt they were to be prejudiced against you, and (as the people in *Elies* dayes, from the miscarriages of them, that pretended to draw near to God) would by your occasion *abhorre the Offerings of the Lord*. You should have walked with such a good Conscience, *1 Sam. 2. 17.* that, whereas the world would speak against you as evil-doers, they might be ashamed: But *1 Pet. 3. 16.* instead of this you have opened the mouth of *2 Sam. 12. 14.* Blasphemy: you have gratified the Devil *2 Tim. 2. 26.* exceedingly: were he capable of joy, you have furthered it, by being contented to be winnowed by him, and to be led captive at his will: The scandals of men reputed for holiness have been his greatest Harvests, his greatest advantages: He hopes by the falls of *Cedars* to break down and crush the *Shrubs* and tender plants, that grow nigh. God alone knows what mischief you have done to Religion already, and where the mischief will end. *Jeroboam made Israel to sin*, many years after his death. Whereas ye should have

have left a precious Name behind you, holy exact copies of Righteousness for succeeding generations to write after, you have laid the stumbling block of your iniquitie before the faces of hundreds and thousands, to cause them to fall. Give over wondring that for these last ten years the Gospel hath had a miscarrying Womb and dry Breasts, know, you have, like the Serpent, the Dragon, stood as in the place of bearing, you have hindred the Birth, or devoured the Child as soon as Born: you have been of the old generation of Gods Curse, *you would not to Heaven* your selves, and *hindred others*, that *would*, if you had not laid your offences in their way. Perhaps some of you may think to relieve your selves, that you know none are taken in these *Gins* and *Traps*: you will know shortly that he that tempteth to evil commits an hainous sin, though his temptation prove not effectual. God will not reward men altogether by the event of scandals,; but by the tendency of Scandal in its own nature: Others not sinning after your example will not excuse and lessen your faults, which were so apt to lead them into sin. *Wo* (saith Christ) *to him, by whom the offence comes*. *Wo* to them that take offence; but greater *wo* to them, that give it. If God threatned *Eli* to take him up by the roots, for not punishing Scandals in his Sons: *because his Sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not*. What dreadfull judgments are we exposed to, who are the offence.

Luke

11. 52.

Matth.

18. 17.

1 Sam.

3. 13.

offence-givers? Wonder not if having caused many to *stumble at the Law*, that God will *make us contemptible and base before all the people*. *Ye are departed out of the way: Mal. 2. ye have caused many to stumble at the Law, 8, 9. ye have corrupted the Covenant of Levi, saith the Lord of Hosts: therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people.* How oft have we been as *unsavoury Salt*? and is it any wonder if we be *cast out, and thrown to the Dunghill? Mat.* O that you would remember *David*, take *5. 13.* him into your Closet with you, he was scandalous in the matter of *Uriah* and *Bathsheba*: it is true, he repented in dust and ashes, he abhorred himself, *made his bed to swim*, the sin was pardoned, the guilt thereof removed, a solemn absolution was sent him by a Prophet, and yet how did God follow him with misery upon misery? He might in the death of the Child, in the defilement of his Daughter, in the murder of *Ammon*, and in the treason of *Absolon*, in his weeping and going barefoot, in his Concubines being defiled, and his own Crown and Life jeopardied, in all these things he might see the woful fruits of Scandal. *Wherefore hast thou despised the Commandement of the Lord, to do evil in his sight? Thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the Sword, and hast taken his Wife to be thy Wife, and hast slain him with the Sword of the Children of Ammon. Now therefore the Sword shall never depart from thine House, &c. Behold, I will raise up evil against thee, out of*

^{2 Sam.}

^{12. 9,}

^{10, 11,}

^{12, 13,}

^{14.}

of

of thine own House, and I will take thy Wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy Neighbour, and he shall lye with thy Wives, in the sight of the Sun. For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the Sun. And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said unto David, The Lord also hath put away thy sin, thou shalt not dye. Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the Child also that is born unto thee, shall surely dye. If David, repenting of his Scandals, be thus punished, what will become of you, who have made Religion to be abhorred? and yet are insensible, unbroken and unhumiliated to this very day? Well may (unrepented of) Scandals lye in your bones many dayes hence, seeing David's did, yea he roared because of his sin: Well may you goe drooping to your graves, being bereft of all joy, and comfortable looks from Heaven, whilst repenting David lost so long the joy of Gods salvation. What shall I say? O all ye, who have lost your Virgin affections to Christ, who have gone a whoring from your God, who are covetous to a wonder, and over run with carking cares, and sinful despondencies, who break out daily into scandalous passions, who by divisions, envies, animosities, overreachings, perjuries, and hypocrisie, have made Religion vile! Know from Christ's mouth, it had been better for you, that a Milstone had been hang'd about your necks, and

Psal.
51. 8.

Psal.
38. 8.

Psal.
51. 12.

Mat.
18. 6.

and that you had been drowned long agoe in the depth of the Sea, than to live so offensively towards men, as you have done; because hereby the Name of God is polluted. *Jer. 34. 16.* It had been better you had never known the wayes of God, than after Profession and Knowledge to depart, and to be as Doggs and Swine. *I Pet. 2. 20, 21.* If you had never profess'd Gods Name, you had never polluted it; but God will reckon with you about it. I am bold to say, that a Drunkard, Adulterer, Robber, &c. doth not so provoke the Lord to wrath, as a Professour may, even by an impatient, discontented word: and for this compare two Scriptures: In the former there is unbelief, and quarrelling with God (face to face, as it were) and yet God pass'd that by, it being in secret, with a short check, *Is the Lords hand waxed short?* But in the other place, *Because ye believed not, &c. to sanctifie me in the eyes of the Children of Israel, &c. therefore ye shall dye in the Wilderness, and never set foot on the Land of Promise.* One scandalous Professour doth more hurt, and more stain Religion, than hundreds of Drunkards; and therefore their Hell shall be the standard to that, of all other sinners. *Appoint him his portion with Hypocrites.* Thousands in Hell will curse the day, wherein they saw your looseness on Earth; for thereby they have blasphemed Christ, as a Friend of Publicans and Sinners, and as if he countenanced you (secretly) in your Lusts, though (for state and form) he hath spoken great things against

Numb.

11. 21,

22. with

Numb.

20. 10.

and

Deut.

32. 51.

*Atrocious
sub nomi-
nis Chri-
sti Profes-
sione pec-
cat.*

Salvian.

Mat.

24. 51.

against such courses in his Word. O ! how
Rom. 2. frequently have you made boasts of God, and
 23, 24. *the Law ; but by breaking of it, ye have caused his Name to be evil spoken of.* When you should have been leading others to Heaven, you have by your example lead them to Hell. How deep shall their Hell be, who are plunged thither with their own, and other-mens sins also ? Though God should give you repentance and pardons ; yet how oft will your Souls bleed to consider, how many you have compell'd by your example to sin and blaspheme, who are actually in the chains of darkness, or hastning thither in a full career ? O that you would no longer be like the body of *Anasa*, to cause others to stand still, or go back from the wayes of Holyness ! O thou scandalous Professour ! What account must thou pass with God shortly, before (perhaps) thou hast turned thine eye to the next page ? Will not the blood of multitudes, who perish by thy means, be required at thy hands ? One sin may become many millions of offences, as the Numbers may be that shall hear of it. No wonder that men are emboldned to sin, that the Adulterer cares not for the Curtains of the Night, nor the Drunkard for the shadows of the Evening, no wonder that the Swearer can spit the Name of God so impudently out of his mouth : these have been encouraged by thy revolts, backslidings, careles, and seldome duties, and violent earthly seekings. O ! if you would consider, you
 bore

bore the Ark of the Lord, you were entrusted with his honour, but you have let it fall, yea cast it in the dirt. O! tremble at what the God of Heaven hath made a standing decree upon this occasion, *them that honour me, I will honour, and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed.* And though it somewhat comforts me, that God will wipe off whatsoever can be cast on him; yet know to your sorrow, you shall not so easily discharge your selves of the Plagues, that are ready to be poured out upon you. God expected that you should have been *Kings and Priests to him*: you should have been *burning and shining lights*; you should have been like *Innes*, which have their *Signes on both sides*: you were of the *King's guard*, you should have had the *Arms of the Crown* on your *Breasts*, and on your *Backs*, so that if any had viewed you, had met you, or had followed you, they might have known you for *God's servants*, by the *Stamp and cognisance of Heaven* upon you: But you have rather been like those *Pictures*, that if you look on one side, you may see an *Angels face*, but on the other *the Devils*. O my Soul! how canst thou write of these, speak or think on them without weeping? O Reader! retreat, retreat quickly to thy Chamber; and spend some considerable time to reflect on thy scandalous Words and Actions, and how much the Name of God hath thereby been blasphemed, and thousands endangered to stumble and fall through thy occasion. How

Jude v.
12.

many, that should have been as *Shields* to ward off those blows of reproach, that would fall on God and Religion, have proved *Swords* in the hands of the wicked, where-with the Name of God is wounded, and whereby multitudes are in danger of perishing: yea, and the poor reall Christians are even ashamed to look up, and to shew their faces, and profession to the world; because there have been such *Spots* in their communion: such unclean, scabbed, and unsavoury Sheep, that have walked among them.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

Their sinning against Knowledge, and impenitently, notwithstanding all means to bring them to Repentance for their Sins.

Against
much
light.

Joh. 15.
22.

3ly. **Y**our Sins are yet further accented by being committed not only against such means of Knowledge, but against much Knowledge got thereby. You have had the most powerfull Ministry under the whole Heavens: And believe it sirs, if you had not heard him that spake from Heaven to you, If Christ had not come, you had had no sin (comparatively) But now you have no Cloak for your sin. You have sinned against more light than the rest of the World. You know that

covetousness is a sin, and that for the iniquity thereof God hath been wrath; and yet you seek great things for your selves still: you know that you are to speak evil of no man; and yet you bespatter every man, almost, to set off your selves by staining and blotting of others reputations: you know God abhors them, that, for a day only, hang down their heads, like bull-rushes; and yet this hath been your manner from the beginning of your Profession: you know your Masters will, you know you should not make mirth when the Lord is angry; and yet you dare, even then be vain and frothy: you know the Lord is much grieved at the backslidings of his people; and yet you have lost you antient faith, love, tenderness, zeal, publick-spirit-ness, and communion with God: yea you have not only known these to be sins, but you have spoken against them, as evils: you have told men how hainous a thing it is to sin against the Lord, and yet you your selves have added iniquity unto iniquity: What cloak have you for your sins.

Fourthly, You have sinned impenitently, notwithstanding all means for your repentance and redcement, which God hath most wonderfully vouchsafed you. The Lord hath for many years striven with you to put a stop to your sins, and to reclaim you from your miscarriages: Sometimes God hath gone up to Mount Ebal, and threatned you with Sword, Famine, Fire, and Pestilence, and yet you have refused to hear from thence:

- he hath leapt up to *Mount Gerazim*, and allured you by all kind of blessings; and yet you have carried your selves stoutly and impudently towards all the offers and tenders of grace for your recovery. *God would have healed you: he hath said, wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, my Father, thou art the guide of my youth, turn thou unto me; yet you returned not.* You have had many of the Lords faithful Ambassadors, who have laid siege at you hearts, to engage them to the Lord, and to take you off from your sinfull wayes; but alas! all the glad tidings of mercy have not affected you, have not won you: all the Ordinances of Jehovah have found little place in you, have left no impression upon your Souls: *You have justified Judah and Samaria in all their stubbornness and rebellion against the Lord.* How righteous is it with the Lord to call upon the Ministers, *Let them alone*, threaten them no more, promise them no more. *Let him that is filthy be filthy still:* you have broken through Armies of Ordinances to commit sin; therefore Gospel and Gospel-Ministers let them alone: judgements overtake them, my plagues, my curses seize upon them, *Let them suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy, because they have hardened their necks, though often reprov'd.* God hath waited more than three and three years on you, expecting fruit; but he sees little save the Clusters of *Sodom* upon you: he hath born with you so long, *he hath held his tongue,*
and
- Jer. 3.*
4. 7.
- Ezek.*
16. 51.
Hos. 4.
17.
- Rev. 22.*
11.
- Prov.*
29. 1.

and said nothing (so long) that you have Psal. 50.
wickedly) thought God to be such an one as 21.
you; So that God must needs be a swift win-
nells against you for the vindicating of his
great and glorious Name, unless you speedi-
ly repent, and seek the Lord, if perhaps he
may be found. O! how long hath God com- Zeph. 2.
manded you every where to repent; not only by 3.
his threats, but by his judgements, which
have begun at the House of God: What
lowd calls have we had? Turn to the Lord Joel. 2.
with weeping, Let your laughter be turned into 11.
weeping: Humble your selves under the migh- 1 Pet. 5.
ty hand of God; and yet how stupid, how 6.
insensible, how impenitent have you re-
mained to this very day, though you have
felt the Arrows of the Lord flying amongst
you; yea though you have been told, If you Jer. 18.
repent, it shall repent the Lord of the evil he 8.
had thought, either to continue upon you,
or to bring down on you: yet alas! where
are the stirrings of your affections, the
soundings of your bowells, the meltings and
relentings of your repenting hearts? O what
marble breasts, and hearts of Adamant have
you?

How few are there mourning for all the
wrongs they have done to the Majesty of God? Eviden-
for all the abuses offered to the grace of God? ced in
Perhaps the fear of Hell (and so indeed self- ing in-
love) hath humbled some *Abahs*, and made sensible of
them crouch, because they would not be their own
miserable; But how few are humbled for
their abuse of the love and grace of God by
fins.

their great offences? What the Lord complains of by the Prophet *Ezekiel*, of the house of *Israel*, that they would not hearken to the Messengers he sent them; but were impudent and hard hearted, may be again renewed against *England*, and all its dominions: the heart of stone is not yet taken away, where is the man, almost, that can say, *God hath made my heart soft*? Though you have born arms against God; though you have sinned against the Lord with an high hand; though upon self-tryal you may find those very sins amongst you, which brought *Fire and Brimstone* on *Sodom and Gomorrah*, and desolation on *Israel*; yet alas! when were tears thy drink? When didst thou make thy Bed to swim? Is thy beauty gone away for trouble? Dost thou abhor thy self in dust and ashes before the Lord? Perhaps in *Rama* there is a (Reader) voice heard, Lamentation, and weeping, and that the great mourning: *Rachel* weeping for her children, that dye by the *Sword*, or *Pestilence*, *Pen* had or are burnt in their beds: Perhaps in *London*, proceeded and throughout the Land, there are some ed thus tears shed for the *Coals of fire* that *God* hath far, be-scattered (the last week) over that famous fore he and antient City; But how few are mourning heard of for their pride, worldliness, contempt of the the late Ministers, and Apostasies, for which *God* dreadful seems to be contending not only by the *Burning Sword*, and the *Pestilence*; but by *Fire* a *Lon-* don: the following lines shew thee what impressions it made on his thoughts, and should on thy Soul.

with

with us? where are the Doves of the Valleys, all of them mourning, every one for his iniquity? A Pharaoh may so far repent, as to say, Take away the Plague; but few cry out, Take away iniquity: Few detest their sins, few loath them, few are so burthened with them, as that they desire heartily to have them taken away. Possibly Sin in its effects, in its sad consequences (as it confines men to the Pest-house, as it endangereth health and life, as it is the founder of graves and hells, as it burns up your houses and goods) is someway burthenfom, but few are troubled with it, as it grieves, resisteth, and quencheeth the Spirit of God, as it is a piece of the highest ingratitude, and as it kicks against the breasts of mercy: And therefore no wonder if Few are to be found mourning for other mens sinnes.

Though Jesus Christ be crucified afresh, and put to open shame: though the blessed Spirit of our God be always vexed and resisted: though there be so much Atheism, Epicurism, contempt of God, and his Ambassadors and Gospel, Blasphemy, Violence, Falshood, Pride, Adultery, Sodomy: though there be setting up the posts of men, with an apparent contempt of Gods holy institutions: though all the sins, for which God cast out the Heathen, and cast off his Israel be found amongst us, and these highly aggravated, and innumerable circumstances; yet how little are we concerned therein? How seldom do we express our inward sorrows by Tears and Fasts? David beheld the

Ezek.

10. 2.

7. 16

Hos. 14.

2.

Of other mens sins,

Transgressors, and was grieved; because they kept not Gods word: Horror seized on him, because they made void Gods Law: Yea Rivers of water ran down his eyes? because men kept not Gods Law: But where is the sorrowing after a Godly sort? Where are the weeping Jeremiah's, Nations; Midhopes? or whose Soul, like Lots, is vexed (pierced) with the unclean conversation of the wicked? If ever God did call us to weeping and to mourning, this is the day; but behold joy and gladness, slaying Oxen, killing sheep, eating flesh, and drinking wine; Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we shall die. And it was revealed in mine ears, saith the Lord of Hosts; Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till you die, saith the Lord God of Hosts. When Elijah saw how iniquity abounded, how the worship of God was crushed, how things went among the great ones of those wicked times, how Idolaters were countenanced, the faithfull prophets durst not shew their faces, he is so burthened at what became of this, that he knows not how to live: It is enough, take away my life: He is weary of the world, weary of his own Land, though the best under the cope of Heaven: yea he thinks it a good time to remove, that his eyes may see no more of these detestable things, and that his Soul may be no longer prick'd with these scratching Briars: But the Searcher of Hearts knows how little we have been affected with all the shipwracks faith and conscience, that our eyes have seen, how

Psal.

119.

158.

v. 53,

136.

1 Pet. 2.

7.

Isa. 22.

12, 13,

I4i.

1 Kings

19. 4.

how feldome our heads have been fountains of tears, how feldome we have made our bowels Bochim, how infenfible we have been of all the ungodlinefs and unrighteoufnefs, which we and our people are guilty of. Wo is us, we have not been wounded through Gods fides: we have not sympathized with a Chrift Crucified every day; But like Gallio, we have not laid thefe things to heart: And yet we have ftill (impudently enough) laid claim to Chrift and the privileges of the New Testament, purchafed by his bloud; Though we never followed Chrift to the Crofs weeping; though we have hardly fhed one tear for all the contempt and abufe of him, which is Epidemical, which abounds from Dan to Beerfheba, from one part of the Nation to another. We pretend we have great forrors, though they are not expreffed by tears, in a fenfitive manner: we think to relieve our felves with the drynefs of our conftitution; and yet we have tears more than a good many, to exprefs our forrors by; if a Relation drops into the Earth, we can follow the Herfe wringing our hands and beating our breafte: if an Eftate (which we have got by carking cares, by neglect of duties, heart-duties, and family-duties) be in one day confumed, and diffolved by a flame into afhes, we then can exprefs our forrors by weeping and lamentation: witnefs fome of your howlings, your cries at the late Defolation by Fire; But commune with your own hearts, whether you were ever made fo fenfible,

Zech. 7.
12.

Ezra. 9.
3.

sible, ever so affected and sunk with the consideration of the honour, that God hath lost by you, and by thousands like your selves? Was God ever more affronted by a professing people, than by us? Was ever Christ so set at naught, as of late times? Was he ever more despised in his Person, Offices, and Institutions, by the *Rhaskheks* of the Earth, than he hath been lately by them, who have had a form of godliness? and yet our hearts are *hard as an Adamant*. O! what grounds have you to question all your mourning for your own sins, whilst you mourn not for the sins of others? Did you mourn for sin, as it is against God? You would mourn for other mens sins; for they are against the Lord also: You would be like *Ezra*, he rent his garments, pull'd off the hair of his beard, *sat down astonished for the sinfull marriages of the people*: But we are insensible; though God be much more dishonoured by the Adulterers and Adulteresses; by the Blasphemers and Atheists; by the Worldlings and Apostates, who swarm in the midst of us. How can we persuade our selves that the *Love of God* is shed abroad in our hearts, whilst he is so much reflected on; and yet we no way (suitably) affected therewith? If a Child, if a Father, if an Husband, if a Friend, be injured, thou art much affected with the injury; but not so with all the affronts that the *Sons of Belial* put upon the blessed God every day. How can we imagine in the least, that we have any true love to the Souls of
out

our Neighbours, whilst we behold them
lifting up the heel against their Maker,
wounding and destroying their Souls by their
sins; and yet we not sigh; if not weep in
secret for the desperate hazards they are run-
ning? Nay, how can you imagine you love
yourselves, your estates, liberties, lives, &c.
whilst God is provoked to ruine you and
them for their great provocations? You
know one *Achan* brought a Plague upon the *Josh. 7.*
whole body of *Israel*; and yet his sin was
secret; But we have Street-Drunkards,
Street-Swearers, Street-Adulterers and A-
dulteresses, Street-Scoffers at Piety and the
Worship of God: And are ye not in danger
to partake of the Plagues that these sins are
crying for? And what yet are your hearts as
insensible, as *Rocks*? The Lord be mercifull
to you, and take out the heart of stone.
How can you be free from being guilty of all
the known sins of the land, whilst you do
not mourn for them before the Lord?

Nay, to shew yet the greatness of your
stubbornness, you are insensible not only of
your own, and other mens sins; but of the
tokens of Gods displeasure against those sinners.
God hath emptied us from Vessel to Vessel;
followed us with the *Sword* and *Pestilence*,
and wonderfully so lately by *dreadfull flames*: *Isa. 27.*
God hath spoyled us of our glory, and hum-
bled us as low as *dust* and *ashes*: it is a time of *Joel 2.*
treading down; and therefore we should weep
bitterly: it is a day of *darkness* and of *gloomi-*
ness, a day of *clouds*, and of *thick darkness*:

We

Eph. 4.
19.

Psa.
137.1.

Jer. 31.
18.

We have had such a *Plague*, as *never the like*: such a *Fire* hath been kindled, as *never the like* amongst us: the *Protestant Nations* are very *low*, and the *Antichristian* very bold and confident; yet we can hardly hang our *harps upon the Willows*; but as if our hearts were *past feeling*, we are *insensible* both of *sin* and *wrath*. O! I hear some cry out of *hard times*; but there is much more reason to cry out of *hard hearts*. We are too much like *Gideons dry fleece*, and like the *Mountains of Gilboa*, or rather like *Jonah fast asleep*; though the *Winds* blow, the *Seas* roar, and make a *noyse*, and we are ready to be *dash'd* every hour against the *Rocks*. I confess *Israel* was an *hard hearted* people; but yet they mourned, they cryed with a *voyce*, *they wept when they remembred Zion*: So have not we: The *Rod* of old was the only engine, by which *Moses* was to work all his miracles, on the *Rock*, on the *Egyptians*, on the *more obdurate Israel*: But the *Rock*, *Pharaoh*, and *Israel*, were sooner sensible of the *Rod*, than we have been. How do we evacuate and reproach, frustrate and defame all Gods *Methods*? and pronounce to all the world, that God hath miscarried in his design upon us? God hath not yet heard Ephraim bemoaning himself. It is true God hath chastised us; but we have not been as sensible as the *Bullock*, nor so soon tamed; we have not been mended under the *Rod*, nor edified by the *dolefull Lectures*, that God hath read us. Therefore thus saith the Lord

Lord God, Woe to the bloody City, I will even make the pile for fire great. Heap on wood, kindle the fire, consume the flesh, and spice it well, and let the bones be burnt: Then set it empty upon the coals thereof, that the brast of it may be hot, and may burn, and that the filthiness of it may be molten in it, that the scum of it may be consumed. She hath moan'd her self with lyes, and her great scum went not forth out of her: her scum shall be in the fire. In thy filthiness is lewdness, because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more, till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee. Jerusalem shall be burnt, and why? In thy filthiness is lewdness, thou art obstinate, hardned in wickedness: Obstinacy in Sin is worse than the Sin it self. Jerusalem had Prophets, Ordinances, Sabbaths, Sacrifices, Mercies, Judgements, by which God would have purged her, but she was not purged, She d'd not humble herself for her sins, the scum went not off. Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Woe to the bloody City, to the pot, whose scum is therein, and whose scum is not gone out of it, bring it out piece by piece, let no lot fall on it. Thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved, thou hast consumed them; but they have refused to receive correction, they have made their faces harder than a rock, they have refused to return. This is a Nation, that obeyeth not the voice of the Lord their God, nor receiveth correction. How many years hath the word of the

Ezek.

24. 9.

10, 11,

12, 13.

Ezek.

24. 6.

Jer 5. 3.

Jer. 7.

28.

- Jer. 4. 4. the Lord come to you, that you should circum-
 cise your selves to the Lord, and take away the
 fore-skin of your hearts, ye men of Judah, and
 inhabitants of Jerusalem, lest my fury come
 forth like Fire, and burn, that none can
 quench it; because of the evil of your doings?
 And hath not the Lord cut off in his fierce an-
 ger the horn of Israel, and burned against us
 like a flaming fire, which devoureth round a-
 bout? He hath poured out his fury like Fire.
 Lam. 2. 3, 4. And yet how few behold the desolations that he
 hath made? How many look on this Judge-
 ment as chance, But consider not the hand
 of the Lord that is gone out against us? Do
 not some say in the pride and stoutness of their
 Isa. 9. hearts, the Bricks are fall'n down, but we
 10. will build with hewn stones: the Sycamores are
 Isa. 26. cut down, but we will change them into Cedar?
 9. When judgement is executed, and Gods
 hand is lifted up, men should fear, and learn
 righteousness; But if you will still go on in
 wickedness, God will reckon with you for
 despising him, and his judgements. I doubt
 not but thousands and ten thousands are sen-
 sible of poverty coming in upon them and
 theirs, as an armed man, irritably! But I
 fear we are too insensible that it is the Lords
 controverſie with us. How soon was the
 Penitential Judgement forgot? Were not
 men as vile Drunkards, Sensualists, Sabbath-
 breakers, Oppressors, and Unclean since
 the dreadfull Plague, as before? and others
 as proud and formal since the Plague, as be-
 fore? That Arrow shot so remarkably from
 Heaven,

Heaven, was soon forgot: And now that the fury of the Lord hath been upon the City (and therein upon the whole Land) in the late shower of Fire, I am afraid, that even this Dispensation will be forgotten, at least not improved as it ought to be: Many and many a time have I feared, that the Lord *Isa. 29.* hath poured upon us the spirit of a deep sleep, 10. and that the Judgement on Ariel, is descended on us; Like men in a deep sleep, we are not able to withstand the Judgement, and like such, we have been insensible who hath wounded us, or why we are wounded: We have not considered the deserving Cause, (Pride, Carelessness, Intemperance, Idleness, &c.) and what way to heal our selves, and extricate our selves out of our miseries? Like a wild Bull in a net, *Isa. 51.* that can hamper and entangle it self more and 20. more; but takes no course to wind it self out of its misery. Who searcheth for the Achan, that hath troubled our Israel? Who sits down, and justifieth God? Who condemneth himself for Pride, for contempt of the Gospel, for Luxury, for Idleness, for Covetousness, and prophaning Gods Sabbaths? The Lord humble us; for the *Bal. Jer. 6.* lows are burnt, the Lead is consumed, and yet 29. the Founder melteth in vain. The Lord took it ill from the men of Judah, when they were not turned by the signes he gave them by Ezekiel, When he was to take a Tile, *Ezek. 4.* and pour itay Jerusalem upon it, and lay siege 1, 2, 5, against it, &c. When he was to lye upon his 11, 12. left

- left side 390. dayes : When he was to drink Water by measure, and to bake his Cakes with the dung of man : When he was to take a Razor, and shave his head and beard, and to burn a third part with fire, and to smite a third part with a knife, and a third part to scatter in the wind; and to bind up a few hairs in his skirts, and to take of them again, and to cast them into the midst of the fire : When by these and such like signes, they were not awakened out of their security, when they reformed not, when they feared not the wrath and judgement of God; but said, *It is not near, Let us build houses* : Then the glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the City, and stood upon the Mountain, which is on the East side of the City. And when the glory departed, then, Thus saith the Lord, of the Inhabitants of Jerusalem, and of the Land of Israel, *They shall eat their Bread with carefulness, and drink their Water with astonishment, &c. And the Cities that are inhabited shall be laid waste.* Therefore, thus saith the Lord God, *As the Vine-tree among the Trees of the Forrest, which I have given to the fire for fuel, so will I give the Inhabitants of Jerusalem. And I will set my face against them, and they shall goe out from one fire, and another fire shall devour them.* Such rumes were to attend them, that Ezekiel (though the Messenger of them) yet must sigh, with the breaking of his loynes, and with bitterness; yea, he must cry and howl, and smite upon his thigh. You may easily imagine, if God were
- Ezek.
5. 1, 2,
3.
- Ezek.
11. 3,
23.
- Ezek.
12. 19,
20.
- Ezek.
15. 6, 7.
- Ezek.
21. 5,
12.

were so angry with Judah for their insensibility of his wrath, when it hung in the cloud of threatenings and Types: How much more will he be provoked to fury, if we lay not to heart those fearfull signs and tokens of his wrath, now that the cloud is dissolved into the *Pestilence, Sword, and Fire*? O *Is. 16.* that my bowells may sound like an Harp for *11.* England! O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might *Jer. 9.* weep day and night! O that for the mountains *1. 11.* I could take up a weeping and wailing; because they are burnt up; because Jerusalem is made heaps; because Gods fury went out like Fire, and burned that none could quench it; because of the evil of their doings! O ye Sons of men, write you the name of the day, even of the same *Jer. 21.* day, the God of Heaven set himself against *12.* Jerusalem this same day. How oft did we *Ezek.* profane that day by gluttony, excessive feasts, *24. 2.* gossippings within dores, by unnecessary walks and sports, without dores? How did we cry, *when will the Sabbath be gone, Amos 8.* that we may attend our callings? Shall not *5, 8, 9.* the Land tremble for this? and every one mourn, that dwelleth therein? Your Sun is gone down at Noon-day. God hath turned your Feasts into mourning, and all your Songs into Lamentations. How dare you now make mirth? What, Now drink Wine in Bowls? The Lord take away the heart of stone, and give us hearts of flesh. The Lord pour out a spirit of mourning upon all the Land, that we may lay to heart the wonderfull effects of Gods sore

- displeasure. Wo to them that are at ease, and are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.
- Amos 6.* Shall not the Isles shake at the sound of thy fall?
- 1. 6.* Shall not the Princes of the Sea come down from their Thrones, and lay away their Robes, and put off their broidered garments, and clothe themselves with trembling, and sit upon the ground, and be astonished at thee? and take up a lamentation for thee, and say, how art thou destroyed? thou that wast inhabited by Seafaring men, the renowned City, which was strong in the Sea, She and her Inhabitants. Now let the Isles tremble in the day of thy fall.
- Ezek. 36. 15,* *16, 17,* *18.* Come behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth. Desolations by the Sword, Desolations by the Pestilence, and desolations by Fire. Some smart that others may Fear. Now all these things happen for examples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the World are come. God means not only to punish, but to teach, and not only the present generation, but all generations to the end of the World? O the much precious blood that the Sword hath devoured! How many thousands hath the Pestilence swept away? And now one of the most flourishing Cities of the Christian World, famous for the Gospel, famous for frequency of Traffick, in a few days lyes buried in Ashes, or Rubbish. If we have any bowells of pity, let us weep with them that weep, let us commiserate the grievous sufferings of multitudes of Men: Women, and Children. It is cer-

certainly now, a time to weep, and not to laugh. And must our Jeremiah's complain of England. *This is a Nation that obeyeth not the voice of the Lord their God, nor receiveth correction?* If some amongst us are sensible of the heat of the Fire, and other plagues, yet we mourn not, we do not habitually mourn for those *sins and provocations*, which have moved God to do this work, this *strange work* upon us and against us: Possibly some cry and howl for the Goods and Houses, that are consumed by Fire, and for their Friends whom the Sword and Pestilence have devoured: But how few are mourning in secret for their contempt of Christ and his Gospel, for controlling and checking the Spirit of God, for their spending away so much time and strength to get a little money, and neglecting to give all diligence to make their calling and election sure? you have mourned for your silver shrines; but not for the pride, carelessness, and covetousness of your hearts: you fear poverty and reproach will be your portion; but why do you not fear what will be the issue of the hardness of your hearts? Hear ye the Word of the Lord, *They are not humbled unto this day, neither have they feared, nor walked in my Law, therefore thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, Behold I will set my face against you for evil, and to cut off all Judah. I even I will utterly forget you, and I will forsake you, and the City that I gave you, &c. and will bring an everlasting reproach upon you, &c.* And if

Eccles.

3. 4.

Jer. 7.

28.

Isa. 28.

21.

Jer. 44.

10, 11.

Jer. 23.

39, 40.

29.

17, 18.

you will not, after all this, turn unto the Lord, read your doom, *I will make them like vile figs that cannot be eaten, they are so evil, &c.* I here publish my fears to all the World: I am afraid that our view of the desolations that God hath wrought, are too short and transient, and that some want humanity in their being insensible of the plagues and miseries of their Brethren, and more want the spirit of mourning for their own and other mens sins. Nay are there none of the Race of *Ammon* left, who say *Aha* against Gods Sanctuary, when it was profaned, and against the Land of *Israel*, when it was desolate? at least rejoiced in heart? Behold God will stretch out his hand upon such a people. He that is glad at calamities, shall not be unpunished. The Tower of *Silo* fell to lead others to repentance. If any will scoff and blaspheme as the *Moabites*, by saying, the House of *Judah* is like unto all the Heathen, who have not suffered more, nor so much as they: God knows how to open the side of *Moab*, and to let in the Sword and ruine upon their strongest Cities: And if the Children of *Edom*, who were long ago for razing down our *Jerusalem* to the foundation thereof, rejoyce, God will remember them, and make them desolate, and lay his vengeance on *Edom*: And if any of the bordering *Philistines* shall deal by revenge, and take vengeance with a despightfull heart, God knows how to stretch out his hand upon them, and to destroy the remnant of the Sea coast, and to execute great vengeance

Ezek.

25. 3, 6,

7.

Prov. 17

5.

Luk. 13,

2, 3, 4, 5.

Ezek.

25. 8, 9.

Psal.

137. 7.

Ezek.

12. 13,

14.

V. 15,

16, 17.

vengeance upon them : And if any of our Neighbours round about shall with Tyrus say against Jerusalem, *Aha she is broken, that was the gates of the people, she is turned unto us, we shall be replenished, now that she is laid wast:* God can soon stoop these Mountains by causing many Nations to come up against them : as the Sea causeth his Waves to come up, and scrape their dust from them, and make them like the top of a Rock. God cannot bear it that the Heathen should be insulting, whilst he is correcting his own : and therefore God hath confirmed it by an Oath that he will deal severely with such Mockers. I have heard of the reproach of Moab, &c. therefore as I live saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, surely Moab shall be as Sodom, &c. And I am sore displeased with the Heathen, that are at ease, for I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction. Leave we these to the Righteousness of God, and let us return to our selves : whilst they are insulting, may we be on humbling and repenting Work. God is come down, and hath done terrible things, that we looked not for : we have been visited ; but not with the common visitation of all people. God hath strange punishments for the workers of iniquity. “ And no wonder, when strange Oaths have been minted of later times that our Forefathers never heard of : there have been strange wayes of Epicurisme and Gluttony : strange wayes of uncleanness : strange unknown fashions in apparel : and for Fraud, cheat-

"ing, and Tricks of Legerdemain they have
 "fresh and new, and frequent every day,
 "Hath not God then a just controverſie
 "with his people? If the Lord draw out
 "Judgements that were never heard of be-
 "fore, and make us ſigns and wonders to the
 "world, and an aſtoniſhment to all Nati-
 "ons, may we not juſtifie his proceedings?
 "If we exceed our Forefathers Sins, what
 "wonder is it, if we feel Judgements, that
 "they were never ſenſible of?

CHAP. XXXIX.

*What use Professours should make of this
Gospel-Glaſs.*

Quarrel
not with
the Glaſs.

ANd now (Professour) to all thy for-
 mer Sins, do not add this great abomi-
 nation, that, having had the *Glaſs* of the
 Word, ſo faithfully revealing many of thy
 ſins to thee, thou ſhouldeſt go away and
 ſtrait forget what manner of man thou haſt
 been. Let not Satan tempt thee to quarrel
 with the enterpriſe; for that the *Glaſs* is not
 broad enough to ſhew to thee all thy ſins
 and deformities: know here are enough,
 preſented to thy view, to lay thee low e-
 nough in Hell without Repentance. Per-
 haps

haps also by thy corrupt reason thou canst plead for one or two particulars, or *bring it under debate, whether they are stains or not?* But know to the confusion of thy face, here are spots, *unquestionable spots discovered, and such as are not the spots of Gods Children.* But wouldst thou improve this (or any other such) *Glass* for the good of thy Soul? Let Gods Honour, and thy precious Souls everlasting welfare perswade thee to receive in *meekness and love* the following *Counsels*.

1. *Reflect on all the particulars, that thou may'st see what are thine iniquities.* Do not behold only, and so goe away: be not contented with slight apprehensions; but muse, that the *Fire* may burn: oft in the *Bill of Attainder*, thy tells thee thou art guilty. *O! ponder these things in thine heart; chew the Cud,* recoyl upon thy self: Let the Lord hear one the more for thee crying out *what have I done?* How have I provoked the Lord? By meditation retain the memory of thy sins, with all their aggravations, as much as thou canst: set past sins in present view, and *possess the sins of thy youth*, as if they were just now committed: now track the abominations of your lives: charge this duty upon thy own Soul, as that which must be done, as thou wilt answer it at thy peril before God and Angels. Perhaps hitherto you have forgot your corrupt lives, and hearts, as you have your natural faces forthwith; but let it be so no more for Christs sake. Consider not

only

only how many of these sins you have been guilty of ; but how frequently, and for how many dayes, or years, thou hast lived in some of these abominations, having oft been guilty of the same sin ; though perhaps thou knew'st it to be a sin , and hast prayed and resolved against it : And because the particulars may seem little sins (though in a sense there is no little sin ; because there is no little God , and sins have their accents and aggravations from the person, who is affronted) yet because it is with sin , as it is with stones, you may carry this stone and that stone without trouble, with much ease ; but when many little stones are heaped together, they become weighty and heavy to bear : therefore I advise that by serious meditation you sum them up joyntly, till your backs, or rather your hearts be broken, and you take up the language of the Prophet, *My*

Psal. . *sins are passed over my head, they are become*
 38. 4. *too heavy for me to bear :* Reflect not only on thy Pride, and carelessness, and other particular miscarriages ; but put all the Items into one main Sum, that it may stoop thy heart.

Confessi-
 on.

2. Away now, and present thy self before the great and holy God, whom thou hast provoked by these, by all these great abominations, and upon thy knees give glory to him by confessing to him as many of thy sins, as thou canst remember, with all their aggravating circumstances. It is the same advice, that *Joshuah* gave to *Achan*, tell God what thou

thou hast done; and what thou hast left undone, *Hide it not from him*: Confess to God all thy low unworthy thoughts of him; all thy enmity against him, his Laws, and People, &c. Go, and confess what envy, what malice, what rancour hath lain in thine heart against thy Neighbour: Confess to the Lord how oft thou hast *spoke evil of dignities*, of the *blood-royal*; of the favourites of Heaven, of the Sons and Daughters of the most High, who were *more righteous than thy self*. Many times thou hast brag'd with the Pharisee, what sins thou hast not been guilty of: now confess what thou hast been guilty of. I know if thou art an Hypocrite thou art loth to bring it forth, thou thinkest it will be a shame to thee; But let me tell thee, it is a shame that thou art guilty of so much sin; but it is no shame to acknowledge it. Only in your Confessions take this advice. *Set your sins in order*: enumerate the several sins you have been guilty of, and though every numerical thought and Act of sin is not possible to be cited; yet give diligence to find out as many as thou canst, and spread them before the Lord.

Bring forth especially that sin or sins, which are thy special sins, whereby thou hast most provoked God. David gave a touch at his Sins in the beginning of his Penitential Psalm; but his Adultery and Blood-guiltiness lay most upon him, and he is never at ease till he hath vomited them up in confession.

All your
special
sins.

Of all of them, Be sure then that, upon a review of this, or any better Catalogue, thou cry unto thy heart, as *Samuel* to *Jesse*, *Are here all thy Children? Are here all thy sins?* He that doth not confess a sin, hath a mind to commit to that Sin again. An hypocrite will confess some, nay many, sins, but there is one sin he is loth to bring forth: it is a *Jacobs Benjamin*, they would keep it back: one sweat bit is covered under the Tongue. But certainly it is extreme folly to impose upon God; for he knows every thought of thy heart, yea he knows thy thoughts before thou know'st them: he knew what thoughts *Israel* would have in the Wilderness. *David* lay sometime under this piece of Hypocrisie: he kept silence a long time, which made his bones waxe alt, & his moisture was turned into the droughe of Summer: But at length (though it was long first) his sin came out, *I acknowledge my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid: I said I will confess my Transgressions unto the Lord.* Be not like *Judas*: he confesseth his betraying of Christ, but there was a close sin which he would not uncover, viz. his covetousness. I meet with many who will confess such sins as are most in fashion, viz. their dulness under Ordinances, their formality, their vain thoughts in duty, &c. But when did you hear Professors confessing their envy at the gifts, graces, and privileges of their Brethren. *Paul's* sin was persecuting Gods Church, and how ready is he to tell God and all the world of it? A good Copy to write after. Bring

Bring forth the aggravating circumstances, With all and lay them before the Lord. Some confess their sin, but their confessions are accompanied with strange excuses and extenuations, viz. *ons.* it was done through the instigation of the Devil, it was done inconsiderately, &c. Such are not for shaming themselves before the Lord; but like Lawyers, plead as well as they can for a bad cause. Avoyd all extenuating Confessions: Father not thy Brats upon the Devil, lest thy account swell even for wronging Satan, when indeed thou wast *in-
ticed and drawn aside by thy own lust.* Beware of this folly; for know that *extenuating sin
aggravates it, and aggravating extenuates sin* before the Lord.

Let thy Confession be ingenuous and free. Freely: Sometimes Conscience, like an over-charged Stomach, doth so over-press men, that they cannot hold, but must out with their uncleanness, &c. Thus it is especially when the Horrors of Death have compassed them round. This confession of sin proceeds not from hatred of sin, and displicence with it; but from fear of punishment: they hope if they confess sin any how, any way, they shall obtain mercy, and this makes many throw up what otherwise they would hide for ever. But O! that you would be more ingenuous in your acknowledgements than *Pharaoh* and *Judas* were, who should say something upon the Wrack, when Gods Hand and Conscience press them down. I know what you will do upon the perusing this sad Catalogue,
if

if God do not sanctifie the book unto you, you will confess sin, but not your own: you will fall a censuring the person or party you do not love, crying out O! how guilty are such and such before the Lord? O! how is God dishonoured by them? how doth Religion suffer by them? yea, but how much hath Gods Name suffered by thy lightness, frothiness, pride, sensuality, back-sliding, &c. O! run with tears, and confess all thine own sins before God. God requires it.

Jer. 3. Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God: And

13.

1 John

1. 9.

on, If ye confess your sins he is just and faithful to forgive. Some say, confess, and be hang'd; but I say confess, or you'll be damn'd. If you had rather be damned than be shamed, thou lovest thy Name better than thy Soul: The Lord be mercifull to thee, or else thou wilt lose both, when Christ shall come to Judge the Earth; for then whatsoever is hid, shall be published.

Frequently.

Let your Confession be frequent, yea constant, until at least God hath done away thy sin. It may be you may fear your heart is so hard, that you shall but sin by a formal dull confession, or enumeration of your sins; But yet do it as well as thou canst, and if thy heart be hard, go, and complain of it to God, and beg him to take away the heart of stone: let the sight of this hardness drive thee the sooner and the oftner to the Throne of Grace, and there lye before the Lord, till he cleave the

the

the Rock, that the waters gush out, till thy
eyes vye with thy sins: Do as our English
Reformer, who ceased not his Confessions till
his heart was melted and broken for his sins.

3. Labour to get your hearts broken for all Contri-
tions of your Rebellions against God, for all the impu-
tation of your hearts and lives. Son of Man,
Prophesie and say, thus saith the Lord; say, A Ezek.
Sword, a Sword is sharpened, and also furbish-^{21. 9.}
ed: it is sharpened to make a great slaughter: ^{10.}
it is furbished that it may glister: should we
then make mirth? Even our God hath been a
consuming fire: and shall not we mourn? ^{Heb. 12.}
The house of Israel is become dross, even the ^{25.}
dross of silver, and therefore God hath gather- ^{Ezek.}
ed them into the midst of Jerusalem, as they ^{22. 19.}
gather silver and brass, iron, and lead, and tin, ^{20, 21.}
into the midst of the Furnace, to blow the fire up-
on it, and hath blown upon them in the Fire
of his Wrath, and they have been melted in
the midst thereof; and shall not we lament?
Yea God hath been exceedingly dishonoured
by Hypocrisie, falshood, breaking of Vows,
Murmurings; cruelties, neglects of his
Worship, &c. Should we then make mirth?
Have not we great cause, even more cause
than ever any people had, to tremble, not
only at the dreadfull Judgements of God, that
are already upon us, and that hang over our
heads, but at the hellish impieties, that
swarm in our hearts? View not only this im-
perfect Catalogue, but look from Genesis to
the Revelation, and what ever filthiness was
found in Men or Kingdoms, may be found

upon our skirts : and shall not we hang
 our harps ? refuse to be comforted ? shall
 not we lye down prostrate before God , and
 pour out water before the Lord , and weep
 till we can weep no more ? Tremble O my
 heart ! under all these provocations : And
 let your hearts be as the leaves of a tree
 that is shaken by the Whirlwind. What so
 many hellish lusts to swarm in thy heart ?
 What guilty of so many millions of iniquities
 against the God of Heaven , and yet thou se-
 cure , light , vain and frothy ? I profess if I
 did not know what a stone I have within , I
 should wonder all the day long , how it is
 possible we can stand under so much guilt
 without shreiks , cries , and lamentations :
 I should wonder how you eat , and drink ,
 and sleep , how you can laugh or sing , whilst
 God is so provoked. Can I think that man
 lives , who is not moved by the weight of a
 mountain on his back. Professour, thou hast
 that which is heavier than Mountains of lead
 upon thy Soul , and yet thou hardly feelest
 it : Thou dost not groan under that , which
 drew not only tears of water , but of blood ,
 yea clots of blood , from the eyes and veins
 of Jesus Christ. I wonder how you conti-
 nue your claims to Christ , how you can call
 God , Father , Christ , Redeemer , whilst
 you have so little love to him , and whilst
 you were never pricked at the heart , for all
 the injuries that you and others have done
 him : Whom you love , you are troubled for ,
 if he be injured , by your selves , or others :

But

But where is your Soul-trouble for your own
 and other mens sins? Are not many as sensual
 as ever? as great servants to the flesh as ever?
 Have you not your Feasts and Entertainments
 as formerly? Though it be a day, wherein *Isa. 22.*
 the Lord calls to weeping and mourning, to *12, 13,*
 baldness and girding with sackcloth: yet be- *14.*
 hold joy and gladness, slaying Oxen, and kil-
 ling Sheep, eating flesh, and drinking wine:
 And hath not the Lord sent you a word, that
 may make your knees to tremble? Is not the
 hand-writing plain? It was revealed in mine
 ears; by the Lord of Hosts, Surely this ini-
 quity shall not be purged from you, till you dye,
 saith the Lord God of Hosts. O! Fall down
 amazed, fill thy Spirit with horror, away
 into thy Closet: though thou art in the gall
 of bitterness, and bond of iniquity; yet pray to
 the Lord, if perhaps the thoughts of thy heart,
 and the wickedness and prophaness of thy
 life, and particularly thy unseasonable mirth,
 and fleshly indulgencies, may be forgiven.
 How can you trade with so much guilt upon
 you? You have had your pleas for your co-
 vetousness, and inordinate affections to the
 World, that God bids you provide for your
 own: But what think'st thou of thy Soul? Is
 that no part of thine own? Is that no piece
 of thy charge? O! Provide for thy Soul:
 Thy Soul cannot be safe, whilst stained with
 so many thousand impurities, which were
 never mourned over to this day. O! Let
 sorrow enter into the very inwards of thy
 heart, and let the insupportable pressure of
 sin

- Zech.* 12. 10. sin sink thy very Soul: Mourn as the tender Mother for her only Son: be in bitterness, so as thou canst not relish those things, which thou hast hitherto followed with so much eagerness: Let the loathsomeness of thy sins be continually before thine eyes, as thy standing dish: So it was with Repenting
- Psa.* 51. 3. David, My sin is ever before me: So it was with the Church, Woe to us, we have sinned.
- Lam.* 5. 16. It is true, they were under fearful Plagues: How doth the City sit solitary, that was full of people? How is she become a Widow, She that was great among the Nations, and Princess among the Provinces, how is she become tributary? ----- Among all her Lovers, she hath none to comfort her, all her Friends have dealt treacherously with her, &c. She dwelleth among the Heathen, she findeth no rest: all her Persecutors overtook her between the straits. The wayes to Zion mourn, &c. She came down wonderfully, and she had no Comforter, &c. The Enemy hath magnified himself, &c. From above hath he sent fire into my bones, and it prevaileth against them, &c. All mine Enemies have heard of my trouble, they are glad that thou hast done it. The Lord hath burned against Jacob like a flaming fire, which devoureth round about, &c. All they that pass by, clap their hands at thee: they hiss, and wag the head, at the Daughter of Jerusalem, saying, Is this the City, that men call, the Perfection of Beauty, the Joy of the whole Earth?
- Lam.* 4. 6, 11, 16. All thine Enemies have opened their mouth against thee: they hiss, and gnash the teeth, and

and say, We have swallowed her up: Certainly this is the day we looked for, We have found, We have seen it. The punishment of the iniquity of the Daughter of my people, is greater than the punishment of the sin of Sodom, that was overthrown as in a moment, and no hand stayed on her. The Lord hath accomplished his fury, he hath poured out his fierce anger, and hath kindled a fire in Zion, and it hath devoured the foundations thereof. The anger of the Lord hath divided them, &c. Our Inheritance is turned to Strangers: our Houses to Aliens. Our Necks are under Persecution, We labour, and have no rest. Servants have ruled over us: there is none to deliver us out of their hand. Our skin was black like an Oven: because of the terrible Famine. They ravished the Women in Zion, and the Maids in the Cities of Judah. But yet they mind not their misery, so much as their sin, Woe unto us; for we have sinned. In order to the promoting of this godly sorrow, I do importune thee, with the highest fervency I can, that thou separate some extraordinary time, to humble thy self, by Fasting and Prayer, that God would give thee Repentance, for thine own, and thine other mens sins: Perhaps to this day thou hast never observed one in order to the getting of a broken heart. O that I could now prevail with thee; for this is the means, that God hath blest again and again: On such dayes God hath softened many an heart, and cast out the Devil of security and hardness, which could not be cast

out in ordinary times of waiting upon God : Let thy main request on that day be for a deep consideration of all thy sins , with all their several aggravations , and a deep humiliation for them. O ! I beseech you , if you have any love to Christ , to the credit of Religion , to your perishing Souls , break through all businesse and impediments , and retire your selves , and fall down at the foot-stool of God , more solemnly , than ever you did : If you are , by the consideration of your provocations , humbled in the very dast , be sure to keep Conscience tender ; Let not your convictions dye , strike again and again , *smite on the thigh* again and again , whilst the Iron is hot : This fire may be kept alive , by bringing new fuel to it. Labour exquisitely to afflict your Souls , that you should be so foolish , so vile , as under Christs Livery , to commit so great , and so hideous abominations. Take words , and say , *O the Light that I have abused ! O the means of Grace that I have slighted ! O the little service that I have done to Christ ! O the many dis-services !* Let these things cut , and grave , and afflict , and humble thy Soul exceedingly from morning to evening , and from evening to morning , till God be pacified towards thee : beware lest the motions of a lazy heart cause thee to desist sooner. A patient that hath had a long disease , must continue in the use of the prescriptions , till the ill humour be purged away.

4. Let your sorrow be accompanied with *Indignation*. See all your sins and loath them, and your selves too. This is promised, *they shall loath their ways and doings which are not good?* O! how much sin have we confessed, which yet we have secretly hug'd in our hearts: Labour to have your hearts rise against your pride, hypocrisie, &c. Hate sin not only for Hell, but as Hell, yea hate your selves for your sins, yea hate your selves that you can hate your sins no more. O that my hatred of my Lusts might be greater than ever my love was unto them! I wish from my Soul Professors were more apprehensive of Gods Judgements, that are upon them and the Nation for their sins: I wish many of us were come up to the frames of the hard-hearted Jews, and expressed so much tenderness, as they did, when Gods hand was heavy upon them, their sins also were an heavy burden: In their affliction they sought God early: they mourned and humbled themselves very much; though with the removal of their trouble, their sorrows wore away. *Hos. 7. 14.* However be not satisfied with this sorrow; but labour for such sorrow as David had, when he was wounded in his heart for sin, though Nathan told him his sin was forgiven, yet he continued his sorrows for his great transgressions: Labour I beseech you for tears of hatred and indignation, be greatly displeased with your selves, because you have so foolishly and wretchedly dishonoured God, and ventured your eternal undoing:

and if yet thine eyes be not like the *Fish-ponds of Heshbon* for thy sins, take words, and lament before God thine hardness of heart, that thou shouldst so grievously offend and provoke God, so good, so gracious a God, and that notwithstanding thine heart should remain unbroken.

Supplication.

Cant. I.
6.

5. *Let there be added hearty cries to God for pardon of all these and all other abominations.* Who forgives him, that scorns to sue for Remission? Here is your work in this day: the Devil and a false heart will put you upon other work; but this is your present work: *They made me the keeper of the Vineyards; but mine own Vineyard I have not kept.* But O! do not leave the work that God sets you about. I know it is your duty to provide for the bodies of your Children; but consider the danger of thy Soul, what guilt thou art under, and give the Lord no rest till he hath blotted out all thy sin, and art assured that he will remember it no more. Relieve not thy self with the general bounty of God, or with the free grace and rich mercy of God, whilst thou neglectest to cry to God for grace and mercy. *He will be sought unto by the house of Israel.* Prize thy condition, that thou art alive to pray: (thou mightst have been in Hell, there to *bowl* for ever and ever) *Seek the Lord, whilst he may be found:* Seek in time before it be too late: And if thou doubtest whether thou hast an interest in Christ and the promises, because of thy hideous transgressions; yet remember
the

the gracious words that fell once from the mouth of Christ to the Samaritan: *If thou* John 4.
didst know the gift of God, thou wouldst have 10.
asked, and he would have given thee living
water. Though thou art unworthy of Childrens bread, and hast deserved to be cast forth among the dogs; yet thou hast to do with a bountifull and mercifull Lord: and therefore be not cast down, so as to be discouraged from waiting on the Lord. It was ill said of him, *why should I wait on the Lord any longer? There is no hope.* I would have thee take better words into thy mouth, and say, "Lord I am unworthy to be the object
"of thy mercy, unworthy to live, worthy
"to be denyed, because thou didst call, and
"I did not hear, therefore if I call, thou
"mayst justly turn me off in thy fury: thou
"mightest answer me by terrible things in
"righteousness, But deal not with me according to my deservings: O! make me
"the great instance of the power of thy
"grace, let thy mercy in pardoning be
"great, exceeding great O God!

Do not delay the suing out thy pardon, away Without
quickly to the Throne of Grace. Remem- delay.
ber *Felix* put off his work till some other time. There is danger in delays, lest your sense of sin and sorrow for it vanish and decay: blow up the first sparks of grace, lest they go out and dye again: take the first advantages of the grace of God. Hast thou an inclination to humble thy self, to pray, to seek Gods face, improve it quickly, lest the

wrath of God (who is highly provoked already against thee) break forth upon thee , *and there be no remedy.* Do not you know that you have lost the sense of the love of God ? But have you also lost all sense of Gods wrath ! Do not you wonder you escape ? that you are yet alive ? that you are not *free among the dead* ? incorporated with the Hypocrites and damned crew ? Will you , dare you , go on in your hardness of heart ? Will you *treasure up wrath against the day of wrath* ? O ! God forbid. Lay by the world (thy false friend , thy treacherous *Joab* , that hath smitten to the earth , with its kisses , and its smiles) Here is a business on which thy life , the life of thy precious Soul depends. *Prepare to meet thy God* : wrath is gone out from the Lord , howl , weep , cry , *it may be you shall be hid in the day of the Lords wrath* ; it may be your sins shall be forgiven. Though the law be *a looking-glass* to shew you your spots (the *Laver* under the law was made of *looking-glasses*) yet it cannot cleanse you : it is the Gospel alone , that pardons. Away ye *wandring Sheep* to the great Shepherd of your Souls : great he is in affection and love to his flock , he hath laid down his life for you , he hath purchased you with his own blood. *Nathans* parable of the *Ewe-Lamb* is most true of Christ , and his beloved Flock : he hath nourished you up , and he is willing to lay you in his bosome. View your great Surety this day. He came under an Arrest for you , he hath discharged the debt

Hebr.
13. 20.

debt of all that come by faith to him. He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again *Rom. 4.* for our justification. He is willing the in-^{25.} cestuous (when penitent) should not have his wounds lye undressed, lest Satan take any advantage thereby. If there be Repentance towards God, let there be Faith towards the *Act. 20.* Lord Jesus Christ. If he hath given you the ^{21.} fore-runner, you have his pledge, his pawn, that he will forgive you. Do not say, God beareth not sinners, whilst there is a Fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness. All thy sins cannot shut it; because it is opened to wash away sin.

6. Add to Supplication Resolution. How Resolue can you pardon your very Child, that will tion, not promise to do so no more? Let it be in the purpose of your hearts to neglect meditation no more, to keep up bitterness among Christians no more, &c. Enter into an holy Vow against your sins. Be a through Protestant, protest against the World, the Flesh, and the Devil. It will be thus if your hearts be thoroughly humbled for your sins, and truly inflamed against them. O say! what have I to do with Idols any more? O that you were very resolute, come Life, come Death, come Heaven, come Hell; yet I will change my course: I will not (through Gods grace helping me) do as I have done, omit as I have omitted. If you are not very peremptory to resist Satan and Sin, not to yeild unto Temptation, you encourage the Enemy to tempt you, whilst you are not re-

solved to deny his solicitations. That woman is in danger of new solicitations to uncleanness, who doth not resolutely bid defiance to the first Temptation of the Russian. Perhaps you wonder, that after many prayers, &c. your sin still prevails; But know (saith one) *sin will be your Conquerour, if you be not resolved to be its enemy.* Till resolution against all sin be wrought in you, God will hate all your prayers for the pardon of your sins. He hath an impudent forehead, a forehead of Brass, that dares go in before God, and say: "O Lord! I beseech thee to pardon my worldliness, and earthly-mindedness, for I am not yet resolved to be Heavenly minded: O Lord, pardon my envy, and I trust thou wilt do it, for yet I am unresolved to part from it: Pardon my Rebellions; for I am not yet resolved whether I shall cease to be a Rebel. Believe it, whilst you do not resolve to hate sin, it is a clear sign you have not a spiritual knowledge of its evil: Did you in the light of the Spirit see sin in its nature, and in its bitter effects, did you see it as utterly inconsistent with all real happiness, and as the infallible and unavoidable precipice of your intollerable and eternal damnation, this would make you hate sin, and to be irreconcilable to it.

In the strength of Christ, But here I must give you this caution, that you *raise not your resolutions on your own strength*, for then you will soon quit them by reason of your own weakness. When you

you bind your self by a Vow against such a sin, take Christ into the Bond to be surety for you, to give you help and strength to perform in the hour of temptation. "Augustine" professed that though the thoughts of leaving his sins were once a great burthen to him, yet at length being peremptorily Resolved, he found it a most easie and delightfull thing to live without them. Friends, your sufferings may be nearer than you are aware of: Your sands I am sure run fast, and no stop is put to them: you may not expect that the shadow will go backward ten degrees, it may rather go forward: you may hardly have one hours warning before you must remove hence: how suddenly hath God cut down the Cedars and the thistles amongst us? O! in that day it will be as scalding lead to thee, that death and judgement surprized thee, when thou hadst not so much as resolved to leave thy cursed Rebellions against thy God.

7. See what becomes of your Resolutions: Reformation how they are made good: thou hast purposed ^{tion.} not to offend, yea covenanted with thy God ^{Psal.} for better obedience, yea thou hast sworn to ^{119.} keep his righteous Judgements. But hast thou ^{106.} dealt uprightly with thy God? O! be not satisfied with purposes and resolutions; but look to the performances of them. Blessed are ye of God, if all the sinnes you have been convinced of, and have engaged against, be now put away: if there be no more pride, covetousness, contention, self-

What use Professours should make

self-seeking ; &c. *returning with seven worse Devils upon you.* I pray God we may see (more than Resolution) some real and permanent effect of all your Confessions, Sorrows, and Resolves. " O ! O ! O ! how
 " would it rejoyce my Soul to see an effe-
 " ctual alteration in the Faces, and Lives,
 " and Conversations of Professours ? How
 " shall I bless God for ever, if by seeing
 " your Faces in this *imperfect Glass*, you be
 " transformed, and your hearts and lives be
 " put into a new frame of obedience ? A-
 " mong all the sights in the World, none
 " sadder than to see multitudes, that had
 " their Faces Zion-wards now facing about
 " to the vanities of the Gentiles. O ! how
 " glorious, how desirable a sight will it be
 " to see these returning with weeping and
 " supplication.

General Here remember your Reformation must be general and special, O ! Labour to do as much for God and Grace, as you have done for the World and Self. As ye have yeilded your members servants to iniquity unto iniquity : So
 Rom. 6. now yeeld you members Servants of Righteous-
 19. ness unto Holiness. Redeem all former omis-
 sions by a double diligence : you having idled away much of your time, had need spur up your selves. See that you walk circumspectly, not as Fools, but as Wise, redeeming the time.

Special. But it is not only a general Reformation that I advise you to : Watch also and pray against those sins by which you have most dishonoured

our God. If thou art recovered of a dangerous disease, thou wilt generally use a good diet, but especially get Antidotes and Preservatives against that disease thou wast so lately cured of. O, where the enemy hath made the greatest breaches, there let there be double guards, and double fortifications. Be *Tertullians*, true penitents: *He would not burthen the Spirit of God, again to deliver him from that sin.* Follow a worthy Pattern, When *David* had shed blood, and had prevailed with God to pardon that sin, afterwards, though *he longed for the waters of Bethlehem*, yet he abtains, and checks himself, because it did but hazard the blood of his Captains.

Non vult iterum Divina misericordie oneri, &c. Tert.

CHAP. XL.

Motives to make such use thereof.

ANd now (to hasten to a conclusion) **O** Motives that it would please God to make my words as an *Hammer*, to break the *Rocks*! **O** hearts be that I may be thus usefull to your Souls! **O** broken that somewhat at last may be hinted, that for and may, through the blessing of God, break your sins, hearts for, and from sin! that may promote your Repentance for your own, and your others mens

mens sins ! And indeed unless your hearts be broken for sin, they will never be broken from sin ; But the more bitterness of Spirit you are in for sin, the more probability there is you will not return unto sin. When men have surrerted upon a Dish, and are greatly afflicted and pained by it, the more unlikely they are to return again unto that Dish. That is certain (saith Mr. Burroughs) either a mans sin will make an end of his mourning, or his mourning will make an end of his sin. Yea, if your hearts be not broken for other mens sins, they are not kindly broken for your own sins. You will never put it out of all doubt that your sorrow is right and genuine, unless you mourn for others, as well as your own, sins ; for it will alwayes be objected, that if Sin as Sin were your Burden, if Sin as dishonouring God, as wounding Christ, as grieving the Spirit, then other mens sins being reflexions on the Authority and Will of the great God, Father, Son, and Spirit, should have some considerable weight upon your Souls. The truth is, others sins become thine if thou knowest them, and mournest not for them. O then ! In what a case are all the hardned jolly Professours, who can make a sport of Drunkenness, Uncleanness, Superstition, Perjury, &c. in others. Consider therefore by the Help of this Glass others sins, as well as thine own to help on thy brokenness of heart for and from sin. Behold (with David) the transgressor, and be grieved ; because they keep not Gods word : Let your Souls

Psal.

119.

158.

Souls (with Lot) be vexed : there are greater sins found among Professours in England, than were in Sodom : Let thy Soul be (as his was) *as in Hell, as upon the Rack*. How can you evidence that you are translated from death to life, because you love the Brethren, whilst you are not troubled to see them wounding and damning their souls by their sins : you are grieved to see any Friends of yours in great hazards and dangers by the Sword, by Sicknes, by Fire ; but the Souls of your Friends are in the greatest danger, yet you lament not the sight of these deplorable spectacles. God forbid that any of you should have grounds of hope to gain Liberties and outward Privileges by others provocations, whilst all their sins become yours, whilst you are not humbled for them. But to lay before you some Considerations, that may (set home by the Spirit) draw water out of the Flint.

1. *Should not your hearts be broken for and from sin, seeing sin hath so incensed God against the Land of your Nativity ? Can you retire from the World, and seriously consider the Prints of Gods displeasure against poor England, and yet remain impenitent ? Is it nothing to you, that God hath for many years been withdrawing from his Sanctuary in England ? O ! Your Ministers have had miscar-rying Wombs, and dry Breasts : Though they rose early, and sate up late, were much in watchings, and in labours, for the Conversion and Edification of Souls ; yet how sel-*
God is greatly incensed,
dome

dome have any been *under the Pangs of the New Birth*? How seldom were any pricked at the heart? How seldom have any cried out, *What shall we do to be saved?* And for others (concerning whom we hoped better things) How have they shed their *Leaf*? How have they pined and withered away, as to *Practical Godliness*? How have they lost that *Seriousness*, that *Heavenlyness*, that *Power of Godliness*, which before they seemed to have had? Your Ministers saw this, and lamented it, they acquainted you with it, invited you to remember from whence you are fallen, to repent, and do your first works; But yet you returned not unto the Lord. Should not this pierce your very hearts? Is it nothing to you, that not only your selves, but so many Professours in England, should lose their faithful and painful Ministers? Is it nothing to you, for God to call home by Death, and otherwise, so many of his *Embassadors*, whom you have grieved, whom you have despised and affronted, and who have been more burthened with your Pride, Earthliness, Divisions, Sensuality, &c. than they are with their present Poverty and Dishonours, under which they lye? What doth it pretend, save War and Hostility, when *Embassadors* are called home? And may not you fear, that the wrath of God is, and will be against you, till there be no remedy? They mocked the Messengers of God, and despised his Words, and misused his Prophets, untill the wrath of the Lord arose against his people,

2 Chron.
36. 16.

till

ill there was no remedy. If God will treat with you no more: believe it, he will fight with you. And O! O! O! *Who will set the Bryars and Thornes against him?* He will goe through them, he will consume them in his wrath. *Is it nothing to you, that there is yet such a Spirit of Division in the Land?* O! What heats and heart-burnings, what animosities and jealousies are there? so that a Brother cannot trust a Brother. *Is it nothing to you, that God hath been so long contending with the Land, by the Sword, and by the Pestilence, and so lately by Fire?* Is it nothing to you, that God permitted that dreadful Fire in London to break forth about Three of the Clock on a Lords Day morning? Did he not thereby cause his Sabbath in a manner to cease in London? Did not he make his holy Day of Rest, a Day of labour and disquiet? Did not he hereby as it were anticipate his Peoples conventions to expiate him, and so drew them as it were off from the Remedy, that his hands being loosened, he might punish, *2 Chron.* and not be prevailed with to pardon? *May 7. 12.* we not say with *Jeremiah*, even upon this *Dent. 9.* account, *The Lord hath swallowed up all the Habitations of Jacob, and hath not pitied, Jer. 2.* he hath thrown down in his wrath the strong. Holds of the Daughters of Judah, he hath brought them down to the ground? Is it nothing, that at the same time, God should send forth such a boisterous Wind, to fann and blow up the Fire, East, West, South, and North, God therein executing the Judge-

- Jer.* 49. 36. Judgement threatned against *Elam*, of bringing the four Winds from the four Quarters of Heaven, &c. If the punishment of one Element (saith a late Writer) be dreadful, as the *Water* was to the *old World*; and the *Air* is in Pestilential Infections; and the *Earth* was, when it opened its mouth to swallow up *Corah*, and his company; how dreadful is Gods punishing a Land or Person with double and treble Judgements in one? What vengeance is that like to prove, which hath Gods Armies of Fire and Wind united? Is it nothing, that the Fire burned at some time contrary to the Wind, and as it were in opposition to it, and was then as uncheckable, as when it had the Winds raising and chasing it? Is it nothing, that in the drought of the season, and the want of water, God seem'd to hinder the application of Remora's to both Wind and Fire? Was not therein the Judgement executed upon *England* in its heart, which God threatned against the *Chaldeans*, a drought is upon her Waters, and
- Jer.* 50. 38. they shall be dryed up; for it is a Land of graven Images, and they are madd upon their Idols? Is it nothing, that the rational and probable anticipations of the conflagrating progresses of the Fire, which might have been, were hid from the eyes of those, whose interest it would have been to have improved them? Did not God at that time take courage from the mighty, and wisdom from the wise? Is it nothing, that *London*, the great Bulwark of the Reformed Religion, against

against the assaults and batteries of Popery and Prophaness, is in a great measure destroyed? But (above all) Is it nothing, that generally there is so little sense of any of these Judgements? *The Wine of Astonishment is given us to drink, and we reel to and fro like Drunkards; But alas! Who humbleth himself, and prays, and seeks Gods face, and turns from his wicked wayes, that God may heal our Land?*

2. Should not your hearts be broken for and from your sins, seeing the sins of any one of you in particular may have been the great Incendiary? This is certain, God hath, for the delinquency of one man, yea for one sin, brought Plagues upon many. If any thing will move thine heart, this will; but nothing will without Gods concurrence: The Lord fasten this hayl, the Lord fix this upon thy Soul; and let it be as *Frontlets* between thine eyes day and night. When *Achan* was guilty of one sin, and that a secret one, when he had stoln a wedge of Gold, when he had impropriated it to his own use, which God had destined to another, he troubled the whole Church of God: *the Armies of Israel fell before the men of Ai*, the generation of Gods curse, yea *Joshua*, their Prince became dejected, and his communion with God was thereby for a while broken. And the Lord said unto *Joshua*, get thee up; *wherefore liest thou on thy face? Did not Achan the Son of Zerah commit a trespass in the accursed thing, and wrath fell on all the Con-*

The sins of any one of us may be the Incendiaries.

gregation of Israel? And that man perished not alone in his iniquity. The iniquity of Peor, though committed long agoe, yet raised a cloud of wrath, which was ready to empty it self upon the whole Church of God for it many years after.

Josh. 22. Is the iniquity of Peor too little for us, from
17. which we are not cleansed to this day, although

there was a Plague in the Congregation of the Lord? The Gibeonites (who had craftily secured their Lives, by an exchange for their Liberties) got an Oath from Saul, and almost 500. years after, when this Covenant was broken, in the slaying of many of them, and Saul was dead, the flourishing Church of God suffered three years Famine for this Perjury. Then there was a Famine in the

2 Sam.
21. 1.

dayes of David, three years, year after year, and David enquired of the Lord: And the Lord answered, It is for Saul, and for his bloody house; because he slew the Gibeonites. Manasseh sinn'd, and that cost the Liberties and Lives of many, good as well as bad:

2 Kings
23. 26.

Notwithstanding the Lord turned not from the fierceness of his great anger, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the Provocations that Manasseh had provoked him withall. Pharaoh refused to give liberty to Gods Church, to worship their God, and this brought unparallel'd Judgements and Plagues upon the whole Land of Egypt. Amalecks abuse of Gods people was not forgotten for an hundred years; but God took up an everlasting quarrel with them,

till he had rooted them out of the Earth: Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, I remember that which Amaleck did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt. Yea, the Sins of one good man; have brought down Plagues upon many. David (whether out of curiosity, or vain-glory, or confidence in an arm of flesh) would needs number the people, (a little sin in comparison of what we are guilty of) yet it cost the lives of 70000. by the Pestilence. So the Lord sent a Pestilence upon Israel, &c. and there dyed of the people, from Dan even to Beersheba, seventy thousand men. Solomon was a good Prince, and yet by his sins he brought miserable confusions on the most considerable part of the Church of Israel, by that great revolt which it occasioned. Wherefore the Lord said to Solomon, For as much as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my Covenant, and my Statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the Kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy Servant. Eli, a good man, and a good Magistrate, yet because too indulgent to his Children, (a Vice common, but feldome considered and bewailed) what a fearful Plague brought he upon his Posterity, as well as himself? And the Lord said unto Samuel, Behold I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle. In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his House: When I begin, I will also make an end; for I have

^{1 Sam.}

^{15. 2.}

^{2 Sam.}

^{24. 15.}

^{1 Kings}

^{11. 11.}

^{1 Sam.}

^{3. 11.}

^{12, 13.}

^{14.}

- told him, that I will judge his House for ever, for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his Sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not. And therefore I have sworn unto the House of Eli, that the iniquity of Elies House shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering for ever. The blood of all the Prophets, (saith Christ) which was shed from the Foundation of the World, shall be required of this Generation, from the blood of Abel, unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the Altar and the Temple: Verily, I say unto you, it shall be required of this Generation. And yet who holds up his hand to Gods Barr, and cries, Guilty, Guilty? Who saith as David, when the Angel foraged among the People, *Let thy hand be against me; for these sheep, what have they done?* We are quick-sighted enough, yea too much, to espye and aggravate the sins of others: We expect fearful Plagues for others Adulteries, Drunkennesses, Swearing and Blaspheming; But the Lord hearkeneth when we will own our Sins to be the Incendiaries, saying, *What have I done?* And *What have I done*, to stop the mouths of so many of Gods faithful Ministers, to unsheath the Sword, to bring forth the destroying Angel, to kindle the dreadful Fire in London? Are there not such sins amongst us, for which God hath plagued much people? If secret sins of particular Persons, have drawn down wrath on whole Nations, Why not thy scandalous sins? Say no more, Such Opposition, Oppression, Idolatry,

latter, uncleanness, &c. will bring in misery, as an armed man: but say, there is danger lest God should make an utter end of poor England for my pride, for my unthankfulness, for my trusting in an Arm of flesh, for my back-slidings: O! how many have I caused to fall by the *Sword*? and how many by the *Pestilence*? And how many have I caused to be ruined by the *Fire*? Verily, if thou art guilty of no other sin, save pride, yet thou canst not clear thy self from being one of *Englands* Incendiaries. O! how was the wrath of God upon *Jerusalem*, and *Judah*, because *Hezekiah's* heart was lifted up? But *Hezekiah* repented not again according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart ^{2 Chron.} was lifted up: therefore there was wrath upon ^{32. 25.} him, and upon *Judah*, and *Jerusalem*.

3. Should not your hearts be broken for and No Re-
from your sins, seeing without repentance the penitence,
mercies you are deprived of, because of your ^{no re-} turns of
sins, will never be returned, or not in mercy, mercy,
yea greater judgements will follow? Unless you but more
return unto God, from whom you have de- wrath.
parted, God will not return unto your
Souls. If ye forsake him, he will forsake ^{2 Chron.}
you, imports as much as, if you continue to ^{15. 2.}
forsake him, he will continue to forsake
you. If you repent not, God will not re-
turn your liberties, your trade, his own
Ordinances in purity and power, or at least
he will not return these, or any other mer-
cies, you have sinned away, in mercy: But
you may expect greater judgements than e-

Luk. 13.
3: 5.
Luk. 6.
25.

ver yet you saw, to fall, not only upon your selves and families, but upon the Land. Think not that they were the greatest sinners in England, upon whom the Sword, or Pestilence, or Fire fell: *Remember Christs I tell you Nay, but except you repent you shall all likewise perish. Wo unto you that laugh now, for ye shall mourn and weep: And will you run the hazard of this dreadful Wo? Will you run the hazard of perishing all, and altogether? Is it not better to mourn now, than to cry and howl in the pit of Hell for ever? God hath determined within his own breast, nay he hath expressed this to be his pleasure to the Children of men, that sooner, or later, all shall mourn for sin, either in this life, or in the next: And is it not better to feel the weight here, than on a death bed, or in Hell? What said a Russian once; when in the midst of his jovial Companions he clapt his hand on his breast, and cryed out well, one day I must know what a wounded Conscience meaneth. God is resolute in this, you shall one time or other find it an evil and bitter thing to provoke him. And shall this consideration nothing move you: I know this should not be the chief ground of your sorrow: But yet Christ was no legal Preacher, when he cryed out, sin no more least a worse thing happen to you. Go thou sluggard to the Ant, provide in Summer for the Winter. But O the great cheats that poor souls put upon themselves! they hope, though they repent not, though they remain careless, worldly,*

&c.

&c. yet others are not so careless as they : though they fast not, yet they hope some do: though they spend not days in prayer, they hope others do; and they hope to fare the better for them. This is like the Doctrine of Rome: the *Romanists* teach that there are some *opera pœnalia*, some penitential works, that you may have others to do for you, and yet fare as well as if you did them your selves; But for my part I shall as soon believe that I shall be cured of the stone in the bladder, or of a filthy Leprosie by anothers taking Physick for me, as that I shall be saved by anothers repentance. O! what folly is this to take relief and sanctuary in others fervent Petitions and deprecations of wrath, whilst thou thy self cryest out, *Soul take thine ease store is laid up for thee by others?* Alas! how dost thou know what others are a doing? Doe they blow the Trumpet, when they go to fast? the more likely it is that they be Hypocrites. But hath not God said, *Go through the midst of the City, through the midst of Jerusalem, Ezek. 9. and set a mark (only) upon the foreheads of 4. the men, that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof?* and again, *Son of man, when the Land sinneth against me by transgressing grievously, then will I stretch out mine hand upon it, and will break the staff of the bread thereof, and will send a famine upon it, and will cut off man and beast from it. Though these three men, Noah, Ezek. Daniel, and Job were in it, they should deliver but their own Souls, by their righteousness, 14. 13, 14. saith the Lord God.* H h 4 4. Should

Impen-
tents lose
all they
do and
suffer for
God.

4. Should not your hearts be broken for, and from your sins, seeing so long as you are impenitent, all you do, and suffer for God is abominable in his sight? Hardness of heart is a nasty disease; it is like a Leprosie, that makes all to shun a man: If you had such a disease, that all would abhor you, would it not humble you to the very dust? your impenitency makes you neither fit company for God, nor his Saints: you are loathsome in the sight of both, whilst you are under so much guilt, and yet insensible of it. A tender broken hearted Christian is lovely in Gods, and his peoples, eyes; but how ugly a sight is it to see a daring, bold, insensible sinner, persisting in a course of sin, without repentance? If the wicked will turn from all his sins, that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, &c. in his righteousness that he hath done shall he live, &c. But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doth according to all the abominations, that the wicked man doth, shall he live? all his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned. And is it nothing to you to lose the things you have wrought? Is it nothing to suffer, and to suffer so many things in vain?

Ezek.
18. 21,
22, 24.
2 Ep. of
John
v. 8.
Gal. 3.
4.
Their
persons
are loath-
ed.

5. Should not your hearts be broken for, and from your sins, seeing so long as you are impenitent God doth not only loath your services, but he cannot take any delight in your persons, yea you cannot be restored into his love and favour? without Repentance there is no Remission:

Jon: Repent ye therefore, and be converted, Act. 3. that your sins may be blotted out. And what? 19. have you no mind to be forgiven your own and your other mens sins? Have you no will to be at peace with God, and to be restored into his love and favour? Are you content that all these, and innumerable sins more should be charged upon your Account? O then! beg of God to break your hearts and from your sins. A broken vessel, a broken heart, will hold best the oyl of mercy. The Sacrifices of God are a broken Spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God! thou wilt not despise.

6. *Should not your hearts be broken for and from your sins, seeing your Repentance will be so pleasing, and so reviving to your even broken-hearted Ministers? Your Repentance will more please God, than all your sins have displeased him. Though your sins have very much displeased him, yet he was loth to depart from you, he hath departed only gradually; But if you will repent he will readily return: in his departure he hath gone as it were a Snayles pace; but if you will return, he will return with speed, he will turn towards you, and fall upon your Necks, and kiss you, and not upbraid you with any of your former miscarriages. And O! what a refreshing will it be to your fainting Ministers to see you returning Prodigals? "Believe it, "our Chains would be worn as Bracelets and "Jewells, and our Exiles would be a Paradise "to us, did we see you putting your mouths "in*

*But their Repen-
tance would ex-
ceedingly please
God and refresh
his Mini-
sters.*

Motives to make such use thereof.

" in the dust, and crying out because of all
 " your Provocations. It is your security,
 " your seeking great things for your selves,
 " your pride, your foolish expectations of
 " our returns, whilst you, and we are so un-
 " fit for such a mercy, that is our greatest
 " burden, and lies heavier on us than the
 " wrath of any, save of God Almighty.
 " God knoweth, who knoweth the secrets of
 " our Souls, that we could be contented to
 " be banished from the face of men, so that
 " you were delivered from the power of your
 " lusts: *If you live and stand fast in the faith,*
 " *we live*, and though we *have nothing*, yet
 " *we possess all things*, joying and rejoicing
 " to see your Zeal, your Repentance, your
 " Indignations and Revenges against your
 " sins. But wo is unto us, we fear we have
 " spent our Lungs, our Time, our Studies,
 " our Life in vain upon you, whilst we be-
 " hold your benumbedness, your insensible-
 " ness of all the tokens of Gods displeasure,
 " by reason of your transgressions. And will
 " you add *affliction to the afflicted*? Is it not
 " enough that we are *turned out of the Vine-*
 " *yard*, where we loved our work better
 " than our *lives*; Is it not enough that we
 " are cast forth from among our People and
 " Friends to seek bread for our selves and lit-
 " tle ones from door to door? But will you
 " have a greater hand in our misery than any
 " others? Will you lay the greatest load of
 " trouble upon us, whilst *others oppress* our
 " *outward man*, will you go on to vex our
 " *Spirits*?

" *Spirits?* Have pitty upon us, O Children!
 " whom we have begotten in the Gospel: you
 " call us your *Spiritual Fathers*, you did re-
 " ceive us as *Angels*, yea as *Jesus Christ*, you
 " would have plucked out your eyes to do us
 " good; O! now what do we beg? not to
 " have your eyes out, but fill'd, fill'd with tears, *Gal. 4.*
 " and your hearts fill'd with sorrow for, *ha- 15.*
 " tred and indignation against, your sins?
 " Weep not for us; but weep for your selves:
 " And is there not a cause? Your tears will
 " be our meat and drink: a great part of our
 " joy will arise from seeing your godly sorrow:
 " *Hagar* was not more refreshed with her
 " fountain, than we shall be to find your
 " heads as waters, and your eyes as fountains
 " of tears, and you weeping day and night
 " for your own and others provocations.
 " Let it suffice you that you have so long
 " grieved us and Christ by your Security,
 " Self-love, Worldliness, Pride, and Passi-
 " ons. O that now the *Egyptians*, that we
 " have seen among you, may be seen alive
 " no more! Let us not be hastned to our
 " graves by your impenitencies and stubborn
 " departures from God. We are troubled
 " to find still among you and upon you,
 " those very sins, which have laid Kingdoms
 " and Churches wast, and yet you secure:
 " as if the Lord had powred out a Spirit of
 " slumber upon you: those very sins, which
 " overthrow the Churches of *Judea* and *Asia*
 " are found among you, and will you not
 " repent, and do your first works? It grieves
 " us

"us to the heart to see sins run through you,
 "as water through a Mill, and you regard it
 "not. We beseech you out of love to God,
 "to your own Souls, and to us and our com-
 "forts, that you would *cease to do evil, and*
 "*learn to do well: Be moved with fear, and*
 "*prepare an Ark.* The old world would not
 "believe *Noah*; But the Lord made them
 "to know he was a Prophet of Righteous-
 "ness. We pity your Souls, we are trou-
 "bled to see what confidence you put in un-
 "certain Signs and Prognostications, which
 "beget carelessness and security in you, and
 "how little you fear the threatnings of most
 "dreadfull Judgements against those very
 "sins you have lived in: many a sad thought
 "we have about you, whilst we see your
 "fickleness, inconstancy, stupidity, and un-
 "grounded, (because unscriptural) hopes.
 "O! *return, return, repent, repent*; that we
 "may be able to say, *ye are our joy, our*
 "*Crown, our rejoycing in the day of Christ.*

Now, or
 never, for
 ought
 they
 know.]

7. And Lastly, Should not your hearts be
 broken for and from your sins, even by what
 may be seen in this Glass, seeing now God gives
 you not only time to Repent, but an opportuni-
 ty of Repentance, and such an one, as if you
 neglect it you may never have the like again?
 When time and the means are married and
 lodged together (saith one) they beget oppor-
 tunity. Now time, and means meet together
 to effect your Repentance. If this oppor-
 tunity be lost, you may never have another;
 and if you should never have any other, your
 case

case is desperate. Opportunities cannot be pray'd, or wept back again. *Esau's* instance *Heb. 12.* puts it out of all doubt. In Gods opportunity it is an ealie thing to repent; but if this opportunity should be lost by you, (which God forbid) it may be impossible for you to repent, God may justly give you up to Judicial impenitency. 'It may be God doth now by this Treatise speak home unto thy Soul, now it may be God warms thy heart, now it may be God works in thee good thoughts and desires; Now is thy day of grace; But (to use the words of one of the chiefest of *Englands* late Alarming Preachers, with some little variation) If thou let this day pass, thou maist desire to have one of the drops of that blood, that hath been offered to thee, and yet never have it: thou mayst desire to feel one drap of his spirit, that hath knockt at thine heart; and yet go without it: thou maist intreat for one dram of that mercy, that hath been offered, and thou hast rejected; but it shall never be granted to thee: God may clap that fearful sentence upon thee, *Now henceforth never grow fruit more on thee*, never repentance come into thine heart more. If now thou wilt not repent and be converted, the Lord may set it down in his decree, that from this day forward thou mayst fumble about thy sins; but shall never get victory over them: thou mayst ever be mourning for thy corruptions; but never mourn aright for them: thou mayst blunder about repentance,

17.

See Mr. Fenners

danger

of deser-

ring re-

pentance

folio

35, 36.

Ezek. 24. 23. 'tance, but never do the work, You shall not
 'mourn, nor weep; but you shall pine away in
 'your iniquities. There is many a Soul tor
 'contemning of God, and not taking up re-
 'pentance, while he may have it; upon
 'whom this plague of God is come, that
 'they are ever repenting, but never able to
 'repent; ever poring upon their sins, but
 'never able to come out of them; they pray
 'and pray against them, but their prayers
 'moulder away under them; for they shall
 'pine away for their transgressions. What is
 Ezek. 24. 13. 'the reason? Why? because I would have
 'purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou
 'shalt not be purged any more. May not God
 'say to thee thus? Because I have given thee
 'line upon line, precept upon precept, call up-
 'on call; not only outward, but inward
 'calls, ordinance upon ordinance, provi-
 'dence upon providence, book upon book,
 'motion upon motion: Because I have used
 'all means, fair means, and foul means; I
 'have plainly shewed thee thy sins by my
 'Word and Rod, and by this glass, I have a-
 'wakened thine own Conscience, yea and
 'stirred up, as by other Sermons and Trea-
 'tises, so by this, good thoughts and de-
 'sires in thee; because I would have cleansed
 'thee, and thou wast not cleansed, thou shalt
 'never be cleansed. Is not this a fearfull sen-
 'tence? Alas! Thy heart is very hard, and
 'thy Conscience very much feared; if the
 'reading hereof doth not make thee quake
 'and tremble. What shall I say? Now is the

Axe laid to the root of the Tree. Thine opportunity is now: If thou pass by this *Now*, *Mat. 3. 10.* thou art gone; for ought I can tell, thou mayst be chopt off presently. *O!* Neglect not the *present Now*, lest thou be cut off for ever. Thou art in danger of being presently cut down, if thou dost not presently repent. Every Tree which bringeth not forth, (in the present tense) good fruit, is (even for the present) hewn down, and cast into the Fire. I shall conclude with the words of the Apostle, *The Earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them, by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: But that which beareth thorns and bryars, is rejected, and is* *Heb. 6. 7, 8, 9.* *nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned: But, Beloved, we are perswaded better things of you, and things that accompany Salvation (such a repentance as cannot be separated from Salvation) though we thus speak: yea therefore we thus write.*

Soli Deo sit Gloria.

ER.



ERRATA.

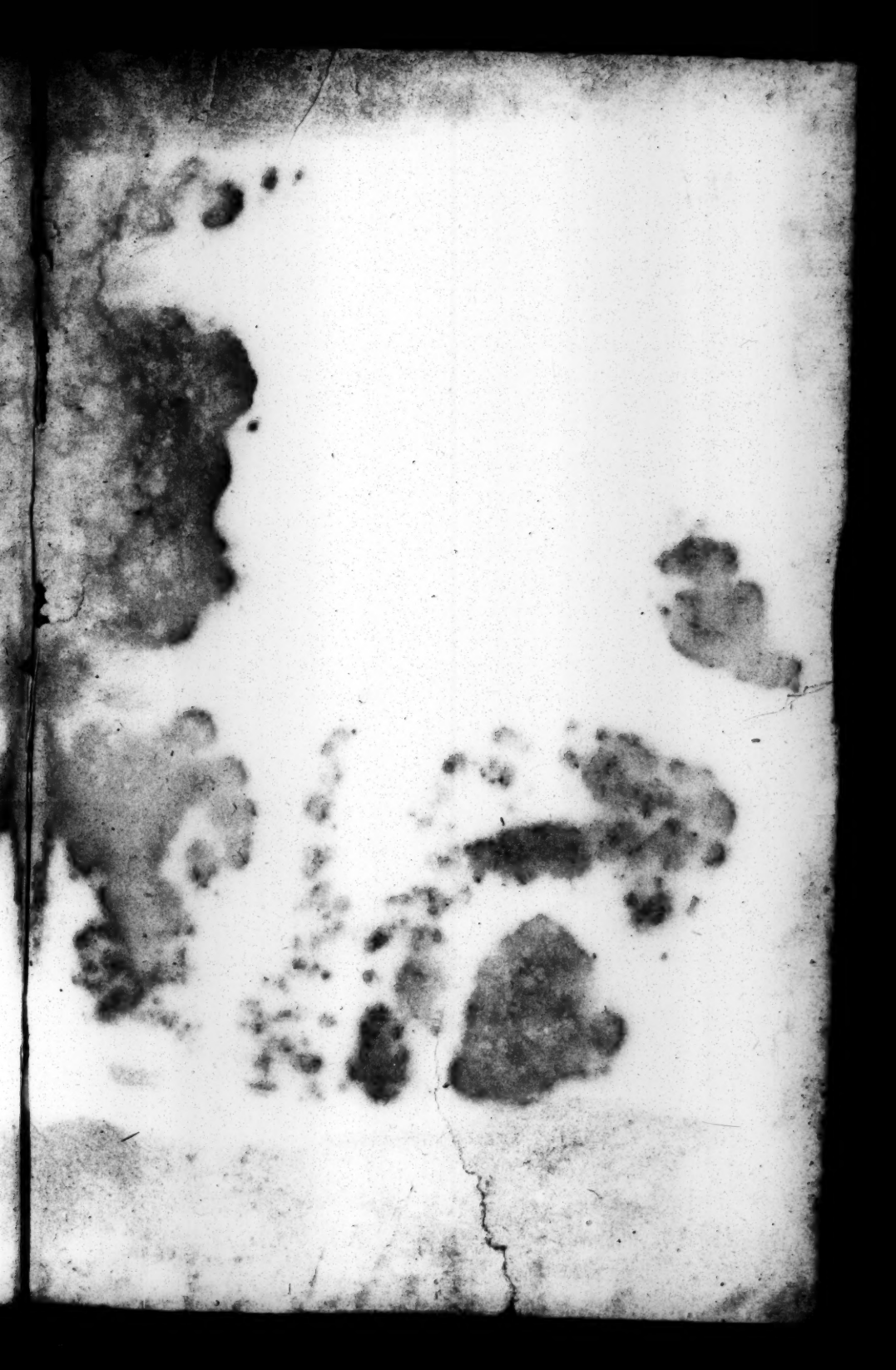
Such *Sense-ſpoiling* Miſtakes, as (notwith-
ſtanding the great care of the Printer and
Corrector) occur in the firſt 19. Sheets
of this *Glaſs*, the *Candid Reader* is deſired
to correct thus,

P Age 2. Line 18. for ſaid, read *ſaw*. p. 37.
l. 20. for buy, read *by*. p. 39. l. 20. for
ſelf ſeizings, read *ſelf-ſeckings*. *ibid.* l. 17.
after joyn'd, adde, and *muſt be taken*. p. 52.
l. 20. for they, read *he*. p. 56. l. 15. for ſure,
read *ſave*. p. 84. l. 23. for poiſed, read *poſed*.
p. 106. l. 10. for begin, read *began*. p. 123.
l. 21. for ſalocy, read *ſawcy*. p. 124. l. 25.
after want, adde, *are ſuch*. p. 134. l. 32. for
meetings, read *meltings*. p. 158. l. 1. *dele an*.
p. 161. l. 28. for of, read *as are*. p. 168.
Marg. for illi, read *illis*. p. 182. l. 26. for
to, read *too*. p. 194. l. 13. for *πυκνῆς*, read
πυκνῆς. *ibid.* l. 16. for *δοκίμαξις*, read *δοκίμα-
ξις*. p. 202. l. 5. for ſaneſti, read *ſanaſti*.
p. 225. *Marg.* for affectionibus, read *affli-
ctionibus*. p. 250. l. 11. for for, read *or*. p.
269. l. 23. after to, adde *do*. p. 299. l. 26,
21. *dele rather*.









np

